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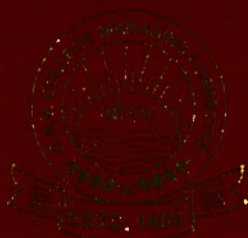
RIG VEDA

VOLUME I

Complete in 12 volumes

Mantras in Sanskrit
with English Translation and Transliteration

D.A.V. PUBLICATION DIVISION

Translated by
Swami Satya Prakash Saraswati
Satyakam Vidyalankar

RIG VEDA

(Volume I)

ऋग्वेद

प्रथमो भागः

RIG VEDA

Volume I

[Introduction and Index]

प्रथमो भागः

[भूमिका-मन्त्रानुक्रमणी च]

Translated by

Swami Satya Prakash Saraswati

and

Satyakam Vidyalankar

DAV Publication Division

Delhi-110034

English Translation of the Vedas

The great reformer, Swami Dayanand who ushered in a renaissance of Indian society towards the end of 19th century had ordained that :

The vedas are the source of true knowledge. To read and understand the vedas is the supreme duty of one and all.

This is one of the ten Principles of the Arya Samaj as laid down by Swami ji. Importance and relevance of the Vedas has been succinctly said in the Upanishadas also :

वेदेन वै देवा असुराणां वित्तं वेद्यमविन्दन्त
तद् वेदस्य वेदत्वम् । (Taittiriya samhita : 1.7.4.6 तैत्तिरीय संहिता)

The Vedas are so called because each statement therein informs a man of the ideals of human life, called the Law of Righteousness, to understand which there is no better source.

To meet the need of a modern, easy-to-understand English translation of the Vedas, the Veda Pratishthan of DAV College Managing Committee, New Delhi had been publishing complete translation of the four Vedas in twenty-two volumes since 1977. The first edition was well produced and well received. Later as this important task slipped into inexperienced hands, quality of printing and paper became inferior while the price was unduly raised.

In the year 2008, the responsibility of publishing and propagating the Vedas has been taken over by the Publication Division of the DAV College Managing Committee. This new 2008 edition has far superior production values and is priced at less then one-fourth of the price it was being sold so far.

Our object is to make the Vedas easily affordable for every one who is interested in having a set of the four Vedas in his home for him and the family members to read and benefit by their divine message.

Vishwa Nath
Vice President
DAV College Managing Committee

This Edition

It is a matter of satisfaction that the 2008 edition of the twenty-two volumes of the complete english translation of the four Vedas has been well received, its production values appreciated and its moderate and affordable price welcomed.

We now present its 2011 edition retaining all the qualities of the previous edition, but in a more compact and handy binding.

Foreword

The Vedas enshrine the cosmic vision and vitality of our ancestors and epitomise a living legacy of divine inspiration, intuition and insight.

The glory of the Vedas is their universal and timeless quality. The subtle and symbolic invocations of the *Śruti* and the mystic and melodic music of the celestial hymns have hallowed human consciousness through trackless centuries with a sublime glow.

The Vedas exemplify a carefully nurtured and elaborately systematized oral tradition which is unrivalled in the annals of civilization.

The evocative poetry of joyous and spontaneous affirmation of life and nature, the unravelling explorations of the seers into the terrestrial and transcendental destiny of mankind, the pervasive immanence and the pristine omnipresence of primeval reality and primordial matter, and the wisdom and philosophy of Moral and Social Order in an harmonious equilibrium unfold the luminous realm of the spirit of the Vedas.

The Vedas are unique in their perspective of time and space.

Early in the history of human civilization, the Vedas proclaimed the essential unity of mankind, untrammelled by geographical barriers and tribal parochialism.

The Vedas declared the enduring filial allegiance of Man to Mother Earth: माता भूमिः पुत्रोऽहं पृथिव्याः ...अथर्व. 12.1.12.

The Vedas articulated the essential equality and intrinsically equal dignity of men and nations and the need for cooperative effort for common benefit: अज्येष्ठासो अकनिष्ठास एते, संभ्रातरो वावृधुः सौभगाय।

ऋक्. 5.60

The Vedas cautioned against recrimination, jealousy and ill will among the human kindred: मा भ्राता भ्रातरं द्विक्षन् मा स्वसारमुत स्वसा... अथर्व. 3.30.3.

The Vedas aimed and aspired for an ambiance of unfailing and ubiquitous friendship:

मित्रस्याहं चक्षुषा सर्वाणि भूतानि समीक्षे।
मित्रस्य चक्षुषा समीक्षामहे। यजु. 36.18.

The true Vedic faith does not countenance dogma; the Vedic reason is not a euphemism for sophistry; the Vedic word is not a victim of verbiage. The essential perception of the Vedas is not a prisoner of perversions. The humanism of Vedas is not a hypocrisy and the Vedic teaching of tolerance is not a transient contrivance. The core commitment of Vedas is to truth and *dharma,* to harmony and happiness, to freedom and justice. The soulful Vedic voyage in ceaseless quest of the experience of inner illumination and with its rich symbolism and manifold meanings is perhaps the oldest and the most magnificent and many-splendoured pilgrimage of the human spirit.

The Vedas gave the *Magna Carta* of Human Brotherhood and Universal Goodwill and proclaimed a noble prayerful preamble to the humanitarian Constitution of One World based on friendship, fellow-feeling, freedom and fearlessness in words which are immortal and ever inspiring and which are central to the basic teleology and technology of building impregnable defences of peace in the minds of men. The Vedic seers who viewed the world of perception and the world of thought as a continuum prayed for the composite benediction of hearing noble thoughts and seeing noble deeds:

भद्रं कर्णेभिः शृणुयाम देवा भद्रं पश्येमाक्षिभिर्यजत्राः। यजु. 25.21.

In that endeavour of building a universe of noble thoughts and noble deeds, the Vedic seers convened a cosmic convocation based on the fundamental human quest for truth and the acceptance of its many facets (एकं सद् विप्राः बहुधा वदन्तिः)

आ नो भद्राः क्रतवो यन्तु विश्वतोऽदब्धासो अपरीतास उद्भिदः।
देवा नो यथा सदमिद्वृधे असन्नप्रायुवो रक्षितारो दिवेदिवे।। ऋक् 1.89.1.

In the Vedic vision of human society, man in his relation to man was not predatory, aggressive and oppressive as in the Hobbesian nightmare which conjured up *homo homini lupus.* The Vedic ideal was that Man was under an obligation to protect and preserve and to aid and comfort mankind everywhere: पुमान् पुमांसं परिपातु विश्वतः। ऋक् 6.75.14.

The Vedic philosophy of freedom and fearlessness is aptly described in the following Mantra:

अभयं मित्रादभयममित्रादभयं ज्ञातादभयं परोक्षात्
अभयं नक्तमभयं दिवा नः सर्वा आशा मम मित्रं भवन्तु।। अथर्व. 19.15.7

Equally, the Vedic hymn of *togetherness* remains a refreshing reminder and a beacon light to the fractured and fragmented world out of whose womb the new world order is struggling to be born:

सङ्गच्छध्वं संवदध्वं सं वो मनांसि जानताम्।
देवा भागं यथा पूर्वे सञ्जानाना उपासते।। ऋक्. 10.191.2.

These noble thoughts made the culture of the Vedas the first and foremost foundation of the edifice of universal values: सा प्रथमा संस्कृतिर्विश्ववाराः। यजु. 7.14.

These enduring teachings of the Vedas are not a relic of the past, nor are they the exclusive preserve or the sole inheritance of Indians and Indo-Aryans. They belong to the common heritage of humanity and are relevant in our contemporary world and in our age. We owe it to ourselves and to the peoples and the nations of the world to share this precious heritage and to disseminate its message and meaning.

—Dr. L.M. Singhvi

Preface

The Vedas are the Word of God. At the very beginning of the Creation, man received knowledge of the Vedas. The Ṛgveda is the most ancient of all the holy scriptures in the world.

Knowledge of the Vedas is not intended for a particular race or country. God revealed this knowledge for the greatest good of mankind.

The Vedas have been translated into several languages. Scholars like Griffith, Wilson and Max Muller have written commentaries on the Vedas in English. But the need for bringing out an unconventional and standard translation of the Vedas has been felt for quite sometime. The task, however, involved dedication, hard work and considerable financial resources.

Col. Ved Ratna Mohan, ex-M.P., was a promising young man, the scion of a family which had implicit faith in the Vedas. His brilliant career was cut short by untimely death in 1973. His father, late Shri Narendra Mohan, was a leading industrialist of India. Daily he would perform *yajna.* He had named his eldest son Ved Ratna (Jewel of the Vedas). He had desired the late Ved Ratna to do some service to for the cause of the Vedas. But fate had willed otherwise. Col. Ved Ratna died before he could fulfil his father's wish.

His younger brother Major Kapil Mohan, who has great reverence for the Vedas like his father, made noble resolve to create an endowment for the English edition of the Vedas.

Dr. Govardhan Lal Dutta, President, DAV College Managing Committee, requested the Vedic scholar Swami Satya Prakash Saraswati to undertake the highly onerous responsibility. Indeed one could think of no other scholar better qualified than Swami Satya Prakashji to accomplish this task. In this task, he is collaborating with Shri Satyakam Vidyalankar, a renowned Vedic scholar.

Thanks are particularly due to Shri Vishwa Nath for his unstinted cooperation in the excellent production of this work.

Our labours would be fully rewarded if through this English translation of the four Vedas, attempted for the first time in India, the divine message enshrined in the Vedas impregnates human consciousness everywhere.

Prakash Vir Shastri

Shravani Poornima
Vikramiya Samvat 2034
August 28, 1977.

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INTRODUCTION

SWAMI SATYA PRAKASH SARASWATI

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VEDAS : A GLIMPSE

Whilst introducing the Ṛgveda to the Western world by his English translation, Ralph T. H. Griffith quoted the following words of F. Max Müller;

> "What can be more tedious than the Veda, and yet, what can be more interesting, if once we know that it is the first word spoken by the Aryan man ?"
>
> "The Veda has a two-fold interest : it belongs to the history of world and to the history of India. . .As long as man continues to take an interest in the history of his race, and as long as we collect in libraries and museums the relics of former ages, the first place in that long row of books which contain the records of the Aryan branch of mankind, will belong for ever to the Ṛgveda."

The Vedas have been given to us in a language which is itself divine. The Vedic language or classical Sanskrit, with its old and modern descendents, represents the earliest stock of speech. Sanskrit is the eldest daughter of the earliest mother-tongue. Indeed so far as the direct documentary evidence goes, it may rather be said to be the only surviving daughter; for none of the other six principal members of the family : Iranic, Hellenic, Italic, Celtic, Teutonic, and Lettoslavic, have left any literary monuments, and their original features have to be reproduced, as best as they can, from the materials supplied by their own daughter-languages. To the Sanskrit the antiquity and extent of its literary documents, the transparency of its grammatical structure, and the other linguistic and philological details must ever secure the foremost place in the comparative study of the Indo-Germanic speech.

The Veda since the time immemorial has been rightly

regarded as of divine origin. The eternal nature of the Veda has been variously discussed and recognized on several grounds by several schools of discipline in India : by the grammarians, etymologists, ritualists and philosophers alike. On the other hand, the historians, evolutionists and the Western critics have tried to interpret the Vedic texts on different lines. In either case, the importance of the Veda is not lessened. Very recently, a young scholar, Jean Le Mee, born in France, but later on settled in the United States, has published a few Rgvedic hymns, and verses, very well illustrated by Ingbert Grütner, born in Germany, through his photographs shot in East Africa--Ethiopia, Kenya and Tanzania, because Grütner felt that the timeless quality of the land and the sense of human origin there best reflected the spirit of the Rgveda. This perhaps refers to Professor Leaky's discovery of human origin on Tanzania-Kenya borders. Shall we not say that it merely speaks of the universality of the Vedic texts, not confined to a single tract of land or to a single definite age?

Jean Le Mée expresses his sentiments in respect to the Veda in the following words : "Precious or durable materials—gold, silver, bronze, marble, onyx or granite—have been used by most ancient peoples in an attempt to immortalize their achievements. Not so, however, with the ancient Aryans. They turned to what may seem the most volatile and insubstantial material of all—the spoken word—and out of this bubble of air fashioned a monument which more than thirty, perhaps forty, centuries later stands untouched by time or the elements. For the pyramids have been eroded by the desert wind, the marble broken by earthquakes, and the gold stolen by robbers, while the Veda remains recited daily by an unbroken chain of generations, travelling like a great wave through the living substance of mind."

It is one of the wonders of wonder, that the Veda could so well resist the ravages of times and could nourish and give form to the religious and philosophical thoughts of innumerable races from the time immemorial. How could this miracle happen ? The answer is again well given here :

"The Veda itself is the secret of the Veda. The foundation stone that India contributed to civilization, the Veda, is said to embody the regulations, the laws of the universe as 'seen' by the gifted poets, prophets or seers, the *ṛsis*." "Set by them," so says Jean Le Mée, "in a special language to be joyfully proclaimed for future ages, it has come down to us through an elaborate oral tradition, consciously designed to prevent any distortion. Even today had we no written record available, it would still be possible to have access to the Veda as it existed when the text was fixed three or four thousand years ago! This supreme monument of an early religion which has left us with no archeological remains, no church, no dogma, no founder, and virtually no history, forms the cannon of the Hindu scriptures, the core of which is a collection of over a thousand hymns, more than ten thousand stanzas in all, known as the Ṛgveda."

To we, the Indians, the authority of the Veda is supreme and final. The Veda was given to man at earliest stage, when the biological species was sufficiently evolved to receive the divine inspiration. The Veda became the fountain-head of the subsequent knowledge that followed, and it continued to inspire human literature for milleniums of years. In India, the most ancient human literature that we possess now is that of the books known as the Brahmanas, but they were also written thousands of years after the divine revelation. These Brahmanas, all without exception, accept the authority of the Veda. The systems of thought which admit of the validity of the Veda are called the *astika* (theist), and those which repudiate it the *nastika* (atheist). To an Indian, the term theism has a deep and wide connotation ; a theist is one that not only believes in the existence of the Supreme Self, but who accepts the same Supreme Self as the first cause of the creation, sustenance and the dissolution of universe, and the source of divine knowledge (cf. *Janmadyasya yatah,* जन्माद्यस्य यतः and *Sastra yonitvat,* शास्त्रयोनित्वात् –Vedanta Sutras I.1.2-3). And thus the *astika* or *nastika* character of a system does not depend on its positive or negative conclusions regarding the nature of the Supreme Spirit, but

also on the acceptance and non-acceptance of the authority of the Veda. And again, the acceptance of the Veda is a practical admission that spiritual experience is a greater light in the fundamental matters than intellectual approach. The Vedic concepts were further elaborated in the text of the Upanisads and in the six systems of Indian philosophy: (i) the Vaisesika of Kanada, (ii) the Nyaya of Gotama, (iii) the Samkhya of Kapila, (iv) the Yoga of Patanjali; (v) the Purva-Mimamsa of Jaimini, and (vi) the Uttara-Mimamsa of Badarayana Vyasa. All these systems accept the authority of the revealed knowledge.

One would naturally like to know about the contents of the Veda, and whenever a question of this type is advanced, one has in his mind the picture of the present day books and treatises of different disciplines, characterized and classified, categorized, systematized and elaborated on certain patterns. The Veda considerably differs in this respect from all such literature. The Veda is a *sruti* and not a *sastra* : a *sastra* is a text of systematized knowledge with a set scientific terminology. The *sruti* has the potentiality of becoming the source of a *sastra*, but by itself it is not the *sastra*. The *sruti* has the plasticity of the material of a perfect form which could, if so desired, be moulded into a *sastra*. And thus, for understanding the nature of the *sruti*, the ancient Indian seers evolved regular systems of discipline known as the *vedangas*, (the limbs of the Veda) and the *upa-vedas* (the Sub-Vedas). The *vedangas* are (i) the *siksa* (orthography), (ii) the *vyakarana* (the grammar), (iii) the *nighantu* (lexicon), (iv) *jyotis* (astronomy), (v) *chanda* (prosody), and (vi) *kalpa* (the system of rituals and ceremonies). The four *upavedas* are (i) the *ayurveda* (the system of medicine and cures), (ii) the *gandharva-veda* (the system of aesthetics), (iii) *dhanurveda* (the system of defence sciences), and (iv) *arthaveda* (the system of economics and wealth—its production, distribution and utilization).

The contents of the Veda may, for the purposes of simplicity, be classified under three broad headings : the *jnana*, or knowledge ; the *karma* or the code of actions or conduct, and the *upasana* or coming into the proximity

of the Supreme Self, or the spiritual realization. The word *ṛk* stands for knowledge, the *yajuh* stands for *karma* or actions, the duties, and the *sama* stands for love of God or devotion and dedication. But this does not mean that the Ṛk-Samhita exclusively deals with the subject of spiritual and mundane knowledge; the Yajuh-Samhita deals with the *karma-kanda*, or the code of conduct (much more the code of ceremonies) ; and the Sama Samhita deals with prayers and chants. There is no rigidity as to the type of classification. In all the four Samhitas, we have the subject matter pertaining to all the three categories enumerated above. The Vedas were not revealed primarily or entirely for the purposes of performing ceremonies and conducting rituals. The Vedic texts have deeper meanings for life and in the most natural language, these texts tried to cover almost all phases of human activity, its purposefulness and attainments. The Vedas do not accept the demarcation between the empirical, ephimeral or mundane world, and the world of Absolute Reality, transcendence and spiritual existence. Whatever is born, movable or immovable, changing and changeless,—the whole of it is *isavasya* (ईशावास्य), or pervaded by the Supreme Reality and is charged with the existence of the Highest Self. The entire creation exists within Him, and in His extensions. He is far beyond the creation (the vast universe is only a quarter of His, as if).

Lord, the Creator

The Veda has come down to us as an inspiration to the terrestrial man, who alone on this earth, amongst the thousands of species, is worthy of the supreme type of revelation. The solid abode of man, the small planet of his activity is the earth or the *pṛthivi*, also known as *bhumi*, and the entire cosmos, to the furthest and farthest ends that he could see with his naked and aided eyes is the realm of effulgence, full of stars and galaxies, the *dyau*, the heaven or the sky ; and the interspace is, of course, the *antariksa* (Ṛv.X.121.5) in which clouds move and the lightning thunders. *Dyava-pṛthivi* (Ṛv. 1.35.9) heaven to

earth is also known as *rodasi* (Rv. 1.36.8). There is a realm beyond the realm of effulgence, another realm beyond the visibility, a realm of blissfulness, known as the *svarloka,* or *svah*, a realm far-spreading beyond the expanding universe.

Our Lord, He alone, is the originator or creator of this universe (creator, not in the Biblical sense, where the universe has come out of *nothing ;* the Vedic philosophy is a concept of co-existence of the two eternals, God the creator and the primordial matter or the *prakṛti*, the multidimensional canvas for the supreme artist for His divine art). He alone is sustaining the cosmos fanning, aspiring and inspiring as if by His two wings.[1] In His supremacy over the universe, He is one and one alone.[2] He alone is the giver of treasures to the bounteous men.[3]

He alone is worth our worship and adoration (*namasya*).[4] He is, verily, one ; may we know Him as one pervading and circumscribing.[5] He is not assisted in his supremacy by any one second, third or fourth, nor by any fifth, sixth or seventh, nor even by any eighth, ninth or tenth. He is the one, circumscribing, the one alone, this one ought to know.[6] All the Nature's bounties merge out and become one in Him alone ?[7]

God is One Though Variously Described

God, verily, is one, though variously described since the functions are manifold and His divine attributes many.

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1. सं बाहुभ्यां धमति सं पतत्रैर्द्यावा भूमी जनयन् देव एकः । (Rv. X. 81. 3)
2. पतिर्बभूथासमो जनानामेको विश्वस्य राजा । (Rv. VI. 36. 4)
   दिव्यो गन्धर्वो भुवनस्य यस्पतिरेक एव नमस्यो विक्ष्वीड्यः । (Av. II. 2. 1)
3. य एक इद् विदयते वसु मर्ताय दाशुषे । (Rv. I. 84. 7)
4. मृडाद् गन्धर्वो भुवनस्य यस्पतिरेक एव नमस्यः सुशेवाः । (Av. II. 2. 2)
5. स एष एक एकवृदेक एव । (Av. XIII. 4 (1), 12)
6. न द्वितीयो न तृतीयश्चतुर्थो नाप्युच्यते ।
   न पंचमो न षष्ठः सप्तमो नाप्युच्यते ।
   नाष्टमो न नवमो दशमो नाप्युच्यते । य एतं देवमेकवृतं वेद ।
   (Av. XIII. 4. 16-18]
7. सर्वे अस्मिन् देवा एकवृतो भवन्ति । (Av. XIII. 4. 21)

Compared to Him, we, the tiny little selves, are infinitesimals whilst He is Infinity in all positive parameters. To this divine one, the man, in the words of the Vedic texts, offers invocations in various adjectivals and adverbials, according to His attributes and functions. So often, we prefer to call Him *agni*, the foremost adorable, sometimes *indra*, the most resplendent, sometimes *varuna*, or the most venerable, sometimes as *aryaman*, the supreme lawgiver; He alone is the divine virility and vitality in us, and is therefore, known as *rudra* ; He verily, is the *savitṛ* since everything is born of Him ; He is *divya*, or effulgent; He is the law-abider, and hence is known as *yama*; He alone is the measure and a benevolent friend to us, and hence, His name is *mitra* ; He is the supreme Lord and therefore *bṛahaspati* and *brahman;* He pervades the entire universe and hence He is *visnu ;* He is blissful and hence known as *soma*, and on account of His benevolence and kindness, He is called *siva* , *sankara* and *mayaskara*.. The Veda stands for the purest type of monotheism. Here we have a few texts to corroborate this concept.

1. God alone is one, though known as *agni*, *king varuna*, *mitra*, *aryaman*, or *amsa*.[1]

2. God is also known as *agni*, *rudra*, *mahah asura*, (*ahur mazda*) and *pusan*.[2]

3. God is *agni*, *dravinoda* (the giver of wealth), *deva*, *savitṛ*, *ratnadha* (the store of gems) *bhaga* (effulgent), and *nṛpati* (Lord of men).[3]

4. He is one, though seers call Him with various names, such as *indra*, *mitra*, *varuna*, *agni*, *divya*, *suparna*,

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1. त्वमग्ने राजा वरुणो धृतव्रतस्त्वं मित्रो भवसि दस्म ईड्यः ।
त्वमर्यमा सत्पतिर्यस्य संभुजं त्वमंशो विदथे देव भाजयुः ॥ (Ṛv. II. 1. 4)
2. त्वमग्ने रुद्रो असुरो महोदिवस्त्वं शर्धो मारुतं पृक्ष ईशिषे ।
त्वं वातैररुणैर्यासि शंगयस्त्वं पूषा विधतः पासि नु त्मना ॥ (Ṛv. II. 1. 6)
3. त्वमग्ने द्रविणोदा अरंकृते त्वं देवः सविता रत्नधा असि ।
त्वं भगो नृपते वस्व ईशिषे त्वं पायुर्दमे यस्तेऽविधत् ॥ (Ṛv. II. 1. 7)

garutman, yama and *matarisvan.*[1]

5. He alone is *agni*, the same He is *aditya*, the same one is known as *vayu* and *candrama.* He again is the same one known as *sukra, brahman, apah,* or *prajapati.*[2]

Cosmic Form of the Creator

Though our Lord exists even far beyond the limits of this extensive universe, the entire universe has been metaphorically regarded as the cosmic form of our Lord, and this form has been variously described in the Veda. He creates the universe (*dyava-pṛthivi*) and the universe assumes His form;[3] He weaves the entire universe through His divine thread (*tantu*) of unified law.[4] The entire universe is sustained by great principle (*mahi praniti*), and protected by undecaying devices of protection (*uti*).[5] The Atharvaveda devotes an entire extensive hymn, the "Skambha Sukta", to the cosmic creation, and the divine laws that sustain it in a marvellous way. (Av X. 7.1-44) Our Lord is the *skambha* or the divine support of the entire creation consisting of the terrestrial region, the celestial region and the interspace. He alone balances the entire creation and holds in equilibrium the six dimensions of space.[6] The creation has been compared to the weaving of a cosmic cloth with divine woofs and warps, shuttles and pegs, the art of two divine maidens (day and night)

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1. इन्द्रं मित्रं वरुणमग्निमाहुरथो दिव्यः स सुपर्णो गरुत्मान् ।
एकं सद् विप्राः बहुधा वदन्त्यग्निं यमं मातरिश्वानमाहुः ॥ (Rv. I. 164. 46)

2. तदेवाग्निस्तदादित्यस्तद्वायुस्तदु चन्द्रमा ।
तदेव शुक्रं तद् ब्रह्म ता आपः स प्रजापतिः ॥ (Yv. XXXII. 1)

3. य इमे द्यावापृथिवी जनित्री रूपैरपिंशद् भुवनानि विश्वा । (Rv.X. 110. 9)

4. रोहितो द्यावापृथिवी जजान तत्र तन्तुं परमेष्ठी ततान । (Av. XIII. 1.6)

5. महीरस्य प्रणीतयः पूर्वीरुत प्रशस्तयः । नास्य क्षीयन्त ऊतयः ॥ (Rv. VI. 45. 3)

6. स्कम्भो दाधार द्यावापृथिवी उभे इमे स्कम्भो दाधारोर्वन्तरिक्षम् ।
स्कम्भो दाधार प्रदिशः षडुर्वीः स्कम्भ इदं भुवनमा विवेश ॥ (Av. X. 7. 35)

working incessantly in the parameters of space and time.[1]

Our creator has also been called the Final Reality or "*ucchista*" (*ut-sista*) for when nothing exists at the time of final great dissolution (*maha pralaya*) and the creation passes into the primordial matter, devoid of name and form, then the Supreme Self alone persists (since He is not subject to change, decay or death). In the *ucchista* Brahman is sustained everything, even the Ṛk, Yajuh, Sama, Udgitha, Hinkara, Svara and Saman rhythms and rhymes (*samnah medih*).[2] *Ucchista* is the name of great Brahman, since He is the undecaying self; in this *ucchista* is sustained the entire universe, the heaven and earth, the water, oceans, wind and moon.[3] In the *ucchista* is sustained the entire creation consisting of name and form.[4] This *ucchista* is the progenitor of all; He is the father and grandfather,[5] and He is equally the sustainer of the inorganic and organic world, of clouds, lightning and rains.[6] Everything is reborn from Him after the dissolution, the disciplines of divine knowledge, the sense organs, the vital realm, the blissful realm, and all categories of human beings[7] (Av. XI.7.24-27).

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1. तन्त्रमेके युवती विरूपे अभ्याक्रामं वयतः षण्मयूखम् ।
   प्रान्या तन्तूंस्तिरते धत्ते अन्या नाप वृञ्जाते न गमातो अन्तम् ॥
   तयोरहं परिनृत्यन्त्योरिव न वि जानामि यतरा परस्तात् ।
   पुमानेनद् वयत्युद्‌गृणत्ति पुमानेनद् वि जभाराधि नाके ॥
   इमे मयूखा उपतस्तभुर्दिवं सामानि चक्रुस्तसराणि वातवे ॥ (Av. X. 7.42-44)
2. ऋक् साम यजुरुच्छिष्ट उद्‌गीथः प्रस्तुतं स्तुतम् ।
   हिङ्‌कार उच्छिष्टे स्वरः साम्नो मेडिश्च तन्मयि ॥ (Av. XI. 7. 5)
3. उच्छिष्टे द्यावापृथिवी विश्वं भूतं समाहितं ।
   आपः समुद्र उच्छिष्टे चन्द्रमा वात आहितः ॥ (Av. XI. 7. 2)
4. उच्छिष्टे नामरूपं चोच्छिष्टे लोक आहितः । (Av. XI. 7. 1.)
5. पिता जनितुरुच्छिष्टोऽसोः पौत्रः पितामहः । (Av. XI. 7. 16)
6. शर्कराः सिकता अश्मान ओषधयो वीरुधस्तृणा ।
   अभ्राणि विद्युतो वर्षमुच्छिष्टे संश्रिता श्रिता ॥ (Av. XI. 7. 21)
7. ऋचः सामानिच्छन्दांसि पुराणं यजुषा सह ।
   उच्छिष्टाज्जज्ञिरे सर्वे दिवि देवा दिविश्रितः ॥ (24)
   प्राणापानौ चक्षुः श्रोत्रमक्षितिश्च क्षितिश्च या । (25)
   आनन्दा मोदाः प्रमुदोऽभीमोदमुदश्च ये । (26)
   देवाः पितरो मनुष्या गन्धर्वाप्सरसश्च ये । (27) (Av. XI. 7. 24-27)

We have said that this cosmos is figuratively regarded as the form of our Lord, the Prajapati, the sustainer of everything that He has created. Man would understand Him better, if He is metaphorically described as if He is possessing a body similar to that of a man, or any other creature of our familiarity. But He is very much different from a human form. Man has two eyes, one mouth, two arms and two legs. This Supreme Lord of ours, has, however, innumerable eyes, for there is no direction in which He cannot see and similarly He possesses thousands of mouths all round, thousands of arms and thousands of legs, since everything in this creation is within His reach.[1]

The Atharva Veda (hymns 7,8 of Book X) describes the Jyestha Brahman (the Supreme Lord) and the Sarvadhara (all support) in the cosmic form,[2] the sun and moon being His eyes, the cosmic winds as His vital breath, the celestial region as the head, the mid-space as His belly, the earth as His feet. The same metaphor in another form is expressed in the Purusa Sukta[3] :

> The moon was gendered from His mind, and from His eye the sun had birth ;
>
> Electricity and fire (*indra and agni*) from His mouth

1. विश्वतश्चक्षुरुत विश्वतो मुखो विश्वतो बाहुरुत विश्वतस्पात् ।
   सं बाहुभ्यां धमति सं पतत्रैर्द्यावाभूमी जनयन देव एकः ॥ (Rv. X. 81. 3)
   (also Yv. XVII. 19)
   सहस्रशीर्षा पुरुषः सहस्राक्षः सहस्रपात् । (Rv. X. 90. 1)
2. यस्य भूमिः प्रमान्तरिक्षमुतोदरम् ।
   दिवं यश्चक्रे मूर्धानं तस्मै ज्येष्ठाय ब्रह्मणे नमः ॥ (32)
   यस्य सूर्यश्चक्षुश्चन्द्रमाश्च पुनर्णवः ।
   अग्निं यश्चक्र आस्यं तस्मै ज्येष्ठाय ब्रह्मणे नमः ॥ (33)
   यस्य वातः प्राणापानौ चक्षुरंगिरसोऽभवन् ।
   दिशो यश्चक्रे प्रज्ञानीस्तस्मै ज्येष्ठाय ब्रह्मणे नमः ॥ (34)(Av. X. 7. 32-34)
   द्यौस्ते पृष्ठं पृथिवी सधस्थमात्मान्तरिक्ष ॅं समुद्रो योनिः । (Yv. XI. 20)
3. चन्द्रमा मनसो जातश्चक्षोः सूर्यो अजायत ।
   मुखादिन्द्रश्चाग्निश्च प्राणाद्वायुरजायत ॥
   नाभ्यो आसीदन्तरिक्षं शीर्ष्णो द्यौः समवर्तत ।
   पद्भ्यां भूमिर्दिशः श्रोत्रात् तथा लोकां अकल्पयन् । (Rv. X. 90. 13, 14)

were born, and wind (*vayu*) from his breath.

Forth from His navel came mid-air; the sky was fashioned from His head,
Earth from His feet, and from His ears the regions, thus they formed the worlds (Ṛv.X. 90.13-14)

The Atharvaveda abounds in such metaphors, e.g. for God's Glory, *brahma-prakasanam,* see Parsni Sukta (Av. X. 2).

Creation

One is inquisitive to know how the world has been created, and the philosophers and scientists from time to time, have tried to answer this question in their own way. The world in which we live has a reality, and our existence in the body along which we are born, and which to a small extent is our bondage too, has a reality and purposefulness. The entire creation has a purpose. The creation itself is not simple; it is a creation in multiparameters. In the dimensions of space and time, we have the sun, the moon, the planets, the galaxies with clusters of stars and wonders of the celestial region. On our planet, we have mountains, rivers, oceans, clouds, the solid crust of the earth, the blowing winds and what not. Then again, on this earth, we have plants, shrubs, tall trees, grass, the organic life in the sea, on the earth and in the mid-regions, from the unicellular life to the highly evolved mammals including man. In the complex that we call man, we have an exterior comprising of bones, skin, muscles, fibres, nerves, veins and arteries, secreting glands, the circulatory system of blood, lungs, kidneys, intestines and the fluids of brain. And within this exterior, we have a complex vital system, the breathing system, the motives, which in Indian terminology is known as variously functioning *pranas,* which dynamize the human machinery. Beyond the realm of the *pranas,* we have a much more complex region of mental activity,—astounding behaviours of mind, and beyond it, we are told, there is another

complex, the transcendental spiritual complex, the domain of the tiny little self,—the *jnanamaya kosa* and the *anandamaya kosa.* As we proceed on from our external-most sheath, the *annamaya kosa,* to the innermost sheaths of *jnanamaya* and *anandamaya kosas,* the complexity increases, and much more intricate is the mutual relationship of these sheaths,—the innerlinks, the interactions. All this is meant for our sake, the tiny little bit known as the lower self, the spirit in bondage, the *atman or* the *soul,* that enters the body and then leaves the body to be born again and again, till it attains its emancipation and temporarily lives in the state of bliss in the closest proximity of our Lord, as if, one privileged of belonging to the family of the Master, free from fetters of various sorts.

The creation is the divine art of our Lord, carved on the canvas of *prakṛti,* the primordial matter, devoid of any name or form, devoid of all attributes, and yet having an eternal existence, (co-existing with our Lord since eternity) with the *potential material causality* as its only characteristic. It is real in this sense, real in its intrinsic existence, real as the canvas for the divine art in multiple dimensions, but unreal, as if non-existing in the sense, that it is non-manifested, is devoid of name and form ; it is again neither *satva,* nor *rajas,* nor *tamas,* but an equipoise of all the three, with the potentiality that when tickled by the Great Artist, *satva* (*ṛta-satya*), *tamas, rajas* all get manifested. God alone knows how He works out this mysterious canvas. His art is beyond our comprehension; it is only when fully manifested that we become conscious of it. We, with all our limitations and difficulty get a glimpse of this great art, and man from the earliest stages of civilization to this day has been striving to know something of the working of the great artist.

The Veda has at several places given an indication of this creation. We shall refer to a few hymns here. We shall first take up the Hiranyagarbha Hymn (Ṛv. X. 121) —the mighty creator is known as Hiranyagarbha, the source of golden light, the Lord of divine effulgence.

1. In the beginning, there existed the Lord of divine

effulgence ; He was the sole Lord of all created beings. He fixed and held up this earth and heaven. To that Lord alone, may we offer our adorations.

3. Who by His grandeur has become sole ruler of all the moving world that breathes and slumbers; He who is Lord of men and Lord of cattle; to that Lord alone, may we offer our adorations.

4. His, through his might, are these snow-covered mountains, and men call sea and *rasa* (रसा) His possession. His arms are these heavenly regions. To that Lord alone, may we offer our adorations.

5. By Him, the heavens are strong and the earth is steadfast; by Him light's realm and sky-vault are supported; By Him the regions in mid-air are measured. To that Lord alone, may we offer our adorations.

6. To Him, supported by His help, two armies embattled look while trembling in their spirit, when over them, the risen Sun is shining. To that Lord alone, may we offer our adorations.

7. What time the mighty waters come, containing the universal germ, producing *agni* (fire), thence sprang the God's one spirit into being. To that Lord alone, may we offer our adorations.

8. He in His might surveyed the floods containing productive force and generating worship. He is the God of gods, and none beside Him. To that Lord alone, may we offer our adorations.[1] (Ṛv. X. 121. 1, 3-8)

1. हिरण्यगर्भः समवर्तताग्रे०; यः प्राणतो निमिषतो०; यस्येमे हिमवन्तो०; येन द्यौरुग्रा०; यं क्रन्दसी अवसा०; आपो ह यद् बृहती०; यश्चिदापो० ।
(Ṛv. X. 121. 1, 3-8)

We have in the Ṛgveda another Hymn (X. 190) devoted to creation, which runs like this :

> 1. From *tapas* (fervour, the tickling of *rajas*) kindled to its height, Eternal Law (*ṛta*) and Truth (*satya*) (the *satva*) were born. Thence was the night (*ratri*, the *tamas*) produced, and thence the billowy flood of sea (*samudra-arnava*, the ocean of cosmic intelligence, *mahat-tattva*) arose.
>
> 2. From that ocean of cosmic intelligence, the year (the time parameter) was afterwards produced, ordainer of days and nights, Lord over all who close the eye.
>
> 3. *Dhata*, the great creator, then formed in due order, as in previous creations, sun and moon. He formed, as usual celestial heaven and earth, the regions of the air and the *svar* regions beyond.[1]

The description of creation would remain incomplete without a reference to the famous Nasadiya Sukta *of* the Ṛgveda (X. 129). We are giving here Griffith's translation of this hymn.

> 1. There was not non-existent (*asat*) nor existent (*sat*) ; there was no realm of air, no sky beyond it, what covered in, and where ? and what gave shelter ? Was. water (ocean of cosmic intelligence, *salila*) there, unfathomed depth of water ?
>
> 2. Death was not then, nor was there aught immortal; no sign was there, the day's and night's divider. That One-Thing, breathless, breathed by its own nature (*svadhaya*); apart from it was nothing whatsoever.

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1. ऋतं च सत्यं चाभीद्धात्० ; समुद्रादर्णवादधि० ;
सूर्याचन्द्रमसौ धाता० । (Ṛv. X. 190. 1-3)

3. Darkness (*tamas*) there was; at first concealed in darkness this All (*sarvam dam*) was indiscriminated chaos (plasma, *apraketam salilam*). All that existed then was void and formless; By the great power of warmth (*tapasah mahina*) was born that unit (*tat ekam*).

4. Thereafter rose desire (*kama*) in the beginning, Desire, the primal seed and germ of spirit (*prathamam retah*). Sages who searched with their heart's thought discovered the existent's kinship (*satobandhum*) in the non-existent (*asati*).

5. Transversely their severing line extended; what was above it then; and what below it ? There were begetters, there were mighty forces, free action (*svadha*) here and energy (*prayati*) up yonder.

6. Who, verily, knows and who can here declare it, whence it was born and whence comes this creation ? The gods (Nature's bounties, *devah*) are later than this world's production, who knows then whence it first came into being.

7. He is the first origin of this creation, whether He formed it all or did not form it. Whose eye controls this world in the highest heaven (*parame vyoman*), he verily knows it, or perhaps he knows not !![1]

The technical terms in the above hymn may have multiple interpretations, but the poetry of the hymn is as superb and touching as the depth of its philosophy.

Very often, the Veda talks of a creation of a different type. Creation is our Lord's Sacrifice, a great *yajna* in which He is primarily involved. There are no limits of

1. नासदासीन्नो०; न मृत्युरासीद०; तम आसीत् तमसा०; कामस्तदग्रे०; तिरश्चीनो०; को अद्धा वेद; इयं विसृष्टिर्यत० । (Rv. X. 129. 1-7)

this *yajna;* it is spread far and wide and beyond dimensions. The text says :

1. The sacrifice drawn out with threads on every-side, stretched by a hundred sacred ministers and one. This do these fathers weave who hitherward are come; they sit beside the warp and cry, "Weave forth, weave back".

2. The man extends it and the man unbinds it; even to this vault of heaven, hath he outspun it.

These pegs are fastened to the seat of worship ; they made the Sama-hymns their weaving shuttles.[1] (Ṛv. X. 130. 1-2)

In the ecstasy of description the text refers to the *gayatri, usnik, anustup, bṛhati, viraj, tristup* and *jagati*, the well known metres (Ṛv. 130. 4-5) and conjoins them with *agni, savitar, soma, bṛhaspati, varuna* and *mitra, indra,* and *visvedevah.* The cosmic creation was thus conjoined with cosmic worship, and "by this knowledege, men were raised to the highest sublime position of *ṛsis.*"[2] (Ṛv. X.130. 4-6). My Lord is a great weaver and He incessantly weaves with profoundest care and skill.

Family of Three Eternals

Ours is a Holy Trinity, the family of three eternals : the Infinite Supreme Self (the Father) (ii) the eternal primal matter, the Prakṛti (the Mother) and (iii) the numberless infinitesimal selfs (the sons). All the three of

1. यो यज्ञो विश्वतस्तन्तुभिस्तत एक शतं देवकर्मेभिरायतः ।
इमे वयन्ति पितरो य आययुः प्र वयाप वयेत्यासते तते ॥
पुमा एनं तनुत उत् कृणत्ति पुमान् वितत्ने अधि नाके अस्मिन् ।
इमे मयूखाः उप सेदुरू सदः सामानि चक्रुस्तसराण्योतवे ॥ (Ṛv. X. 130. 1-2)

2. अग्नेर्गायत्र्यभवत्०; विराण्मित्रावरुणयो०;
चाक्लृप्रे तेन ऋषयो मनुष्या यज्ञे जाते पितरो नः पुराणे ।
पश्यन् मन्ये मनसा चक्षसा तान् य इमं यज्ञमयजन्त पूर्वे ॥ (Ṛv. X. 130. 4-6)

us are of the same *age*, and in this sense, He, the Supreme Self, though our Father, is not so in the biological sense, and similarly, the causal primal matter our mother, but again, not in the biological sense. All the three of us, the father, sons and the mother, are of the same age, and shall continue to exist for ever. None is born and none would die.

Our infinitesimality in all parameters (but of age) imposes certain limitations on us, the souls, the lower selfs ; like the tiny little sparks, we shine in our glory, but to a limited extent. This infinitesimality extends over the dimensions of our *capacity to know, capacity to do*, and *capacity to enjoy.* The Supreme Self is infinite in these three parameters, as in so many others. Our inherent infinitesimality in these three demensions incapacitates us to acquire true knowledge, with the result that we do what we ought not to do, and then suffer its consequences. This finally manifests in what we call sin, *papa* or *enas* (एनस्) in the Vedic terminology. All of us, who are born with mortal fetters, are prey to this sin. God alone is free from sins since He is perfect, and infinite. He does not assume the body form; He is not incarnated. The last chapter of the Yajurveda describes Him thus :

> He, the Lord, effulgent, without a body, free from wounds and sinews, ever pure and very much above the sins, has been circumscribing us from all the sides. He is the one with penetrating wisdom (a superb poet), intelligence personified, extending in all parameters, self-existing, and judiciously just as much and as it ought to be, He creates commodities (of knowledge and wealth) for His ever-existing people[1]. (Yv. XL. 8)

Here the Trinity is of (i) *sah svayambhu*, the Lord, self-existing, (ii) *sasvatibhyah samabhyah*, the innumerable ever-existing people (the lower selfs); (iii) *arthan*, the

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1. स पर्य्यगाच्छुक्रमकायमव्रणमस्नाविरꣳ शुद्धमपापविद्धम् । कविर्मनीषी परिभूः स्वयम्भूर्याथातथ्यतोऽर्थान् व्यदधाच्छाश्वतीभ्यः समाभ्यः ॥ (Yv. XL. 8)

matter moulded into the commodities, necessary for the sustenance of people.

The idea of Trinity is equally clear elsewhere in the Ṛgveda and is expressed as follows :

> There are two birds with beautiful wings, related to each other (of the same age) perching on one and the same tree. The one of the two enjoys the taste of the fruit of the tree, whilst the other watches with care the former one, He Himself abstaining from eating (Rv. I. 164. 20)[1].

The tree consists of Prakrti and Prakṛti-born products, and the two birds are the lower self and the Supreme Self.

The same hymn further says :

> There are three fundamentals (*kesinah*). The first one inseminates seedings in the time-parameter. The second one with its inquisitiveness looks at the creation from all the sides. The third one is such whose manifestations are visible but not her actual form.[2] (Ṛv. I. 164.44) .

Sin, Bondage and Cycle of Rebirths

One of the greatest contributions of Indian thought is the concept of eschatology, the doctrine of rebirths or reincarnations. The self itself is eternal; it neither dies nor decays, whilst it passes on through a cycle of births and deaths, and another wider cycle of bondage and emancipation. One who is born must die some day, and one that dies is born again, and thus the continuity of life is maintained. Hundred autumns or hundred winters is the expected age of a man (not so of other species). Of

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1. द्वा सुपर्णा सयुजा सखाया समानं वृक्षं परि षस्वजाते ।
   तयोरन्यः पिप्पलं स्वाद्वत्त्यनश्नन्नन्यो अभिचाकशीति ॥ (Rv. I. 164. 20)
2. त्रयः केशिन ऋतुथा वि चक्षते संवत्सरे वपत एक एषाम् ।
   विश्वमेको अभि चष्टे शचीभिर्ध्राजिरेकस्य ददृशे न रूपम् ॥ (Rv. I. 164. 44)

course, very few live to this age, and still less who would go beyond a century. There are a number of Vedic verses, which clearly indicate that one could live hundred terrestrial years (year as the duration of a revolution of the planet earth round the Sun).

> The sun, the effulgent representative eye of Nature's bounties has already come up. May we see for hundred autumns, live for hundred autumns, speak for hundred autumns, may we live hale and hearty, depending on none, for hundred years, and even beyond one hundred.[1] (Ṛv. VII. 66. 16; Yv. XXXVI. 24)

The same idea has been expressed in a series of fragmentary verses of the Atharva-veda[2] (Av. XIX. 67.1-8). May we all see, live, continue to be enlightened, continue to grow, continue to be sustained, continue to prosper, and continue to develop for full one hundred years, and even beyond one hundred.

By leading a careful and carefree dedicated life, following the disciplines of health, hygiene and ethics, one can go up to a full term of life. Sin is our greatest handicap in leading a full life. The Veda uses four terms for sin : *papa*, *amhas*, *enas*, and *agha*. The *papa* is the sin of mind; our thoughts are breeding place of sin, and hence we are told to get rid of the sin of mind : O sin of thoughts (of mind), may you go away from us[3] (Av. VI. 45. 15). The Atharva-veda in Book IV, has a number of hymns (e. g. 23-29) for getting rid of sin.[4] There is a full

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1. तच्चक्षुर्देवहितं शुक्रमुच्चरत्। पश्येम शरदः शतं जीवेम शरदः शतम् । (Ṛv. VII.66. 16) with further elaboration in Yv. XXXVI. 24—शृणुयाम शरदः शतं प्र ब्रवाम शरदः शतमदीनाः स्याम शरदः शतं भूयश्च शरदः शतात् ।
2. पश्येम शरदः शतम् (१); जीवेम शरदः शतम् (२); बुध्येम शरदः शतम् (३); रोहेम शरदः शतम् (४); पूषेम शरदः शतम् (५); भवेम शरदः शतम् (६); भूयेम शरदः शतम् (७); भूयसी शरदः शतम् (८) । (Av. XIX. 67. 1-8)
3. परोऽपेहि मनस्पाप । (Av. VI. 45. 1)
4. स नो मुञ्चत्वंहसः । (Av. IV. 23 and IV. 24); तौ नो मुञ्चतमंहसः । (Av. IV. 25, 28, 29); ते नो मुञ्चतमंहसः । (Av. IV. 26, 27); Also see book XI. 6—ते नो मुञ्चन्त्वंहसः ।

hymn in the Ṛgveda (I.97) where the line repeated is "may we get rid of our *agha* or sins".[1] God alone would help us in getting across the sin as one on a boat.[2] God alone knows our actions, good or bad, and hence he can lead us on the path of righteousness; we shall have to struggle constantly with our crooked sins; to that Lord of ours, our most respectful regards and reverences.[3]

God alone is our atonement for the sins committed by the enlightened men of our society (*devakṛta*); for the sins committed by ordinary men (*manusyakṛta*), also for the sins committed by our elders in the society (*pitṛkṛta*); He is our atonement for sins committed by self, also from our sins of sins, consciously or unconsicously committed both, for the sins that may be small or great, for all of them.[4] (Yv. VIII 13).

Of course, one shall have to struggle against his sins, and against the sins committed by others in the society in which he has been placed; one has to be prepared to face the consequences with a determined will, but the sin shall not be extricated away till He comes to our rescue. In our determined efforts to put up a fight against ignorance, evils and weaknesses, He is guide and, strength, He is our *vratapa* or *vratapati* (the sustainer in our determined efforts).[5] God is for this reason our ultimate shelter and the final resort (*upayamagṛhitosi*), and is our final atone-

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1. अप नः शोशुचदघम् । (Ṛv. I. 97. 1-8)
2. स नः सिन्धुमिव नावयाति पर्षा स्वस्तये । अप नः शोशुचदघम् ॥ (Ṛv. I. 97. 8)
3. अग्ने नय सुपथा राये अस्मान् विश्वानि देव वयुनानि विद्वान् ।
   युयोध्यस्मज्जुहुराणमेनो भूयिष्ठां ते नम उक्तिं विधेम ॥ (Ṛv. I. 189. 1)
4. देवकृतस्यैनसोऽवयजनमसि मनुष्यकृतस्यैनसोऽवयजनमसि पितृकृत-
   स्यैनसोऽवयजनमस्यात्मकृतस्यैनसोऽवयजनमस्येनसऽएनसोऽवयजनमसि ।
   यच्चाहमेनो विद्वांश्चकार यच्चाविद्वांस्तस्य सर्वस्यैनसोऽवयजनमसि ॥
   (Yv. VIII. 13)
5. अग्ने व्रतपास्ते व्रतपा या तव तनूर्मय्यभूदेषा
   सा त्वयि यो मम तनूस्त्वय्यभूदियꣳ सा मयि ।
   यथायथं नौ व्रतपते व्रतान्यनु मे दीक्षां दीक्षापति-
   रमꣳस्तानु तपस्तपस्पतिः ॥ (Yv. V. 40)
   अग्ने व्रतपते व्रतं चरिष्यामि तच्छकेयं तन्मे राध्यताम् ।
   इदमहमनृतात् सत्यमुपैमि ॥ (Yv. I. 5)

ment (*avayajanamasi*).[1]

Sins are not excused by our Lord, but He gives us strength to struggle against the consequences; this struggle itself is the atonement. Sins lead to bondage, and through bondage alone is our atonement and liberation thereafter. The sin is inherent in us in our own infinitesimality, and the cycle of life and death is its atnoement. It appears to be a cruel punishment, but ultimately it is its own reward and one of greatest blessings from the side of our Lord. And there is no escape from it either. Bondage is apparently a tragedy, but effectively it becomes a remedy for the malady and finally a bliss and reward. Sin leads to a cycle of bondages, and bondages to liberation. This is the puposefulness of life.

If not going to be liberated so soon, may we then request for the new and fresh life, a renovated body :

> O Asuniti, the Lord of Death, give us our sight again; give us again our breath and our enjoyment. Long may we look upon the sun uprising. O Anumati, the Gracious Lord, may you favour and bless us.[2] (Ṛv. X.59.6)

We have similar lines in the Yajur-veda, with a prayer for the next body.The old shattered body is of not much use to us now, and hence here is an invocation for a new birth for fresh attainments and atonements :

> Again the mind, again the full age, again the breath, and again the self-possession, may we obtain. Again the eye, again the ear, may we get. The cosmic Lord, devoid of evils, the sustainer of our bodies, the adorable, may He protect us from all

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1. उपयामगृहीतोऽस्याग्रयणोऽसि स्वाग्रयणः । पाहि यज्ञं पाहि यज्ञपतिं० ।
(Yv. VII. 20)

2. असुनीते पुनरस्मासु चक्षुः पुनः प्राणमिह नो धेहि भोगम् ।
ज्योक् पश्येम सूर्य्यमुच्चरन्तमनुमते मृळया नः स्वस्ति ॥ (Ṛv. X. 59. 6)

unwanted evils.[1] (Yv. IV. 15)

The Atharva-veda is again very clear on the subject of rebirths :

> One, who in the first (life) does actions unto *dharma* or righteous dictates, on that account he obtains good bodies in the (subsequent) life. That soul, after leaving the first, enters into the (next) *yoni* or womb. There having been blessed with true divine speech, he enjoys.[2] (Av. V. 1. 2.)

Professor R. D. Ranade refers to a hymn of the Ṛgveda in connection with eschatology. He says : "We have one very characteristic hymn of the Ṛgveda which, we fear, has not been noticed with even a tithe of the attention which it really deserves. The meaning which Roth, Böhtlingk and Geldner have found in at least two verses of hymn has been strangely overlooked, and it is wonderful that people keep saying that the idea of transmigration is *not* found in the Ṛgveda. The hymn we refer to is the great riddle hymn of the Ṛgveda (Asya Vamasya Sukta, Ṛv. I. 164)." (A Constructive Survey of the Upanishadic Philosophy, p. 147). The verses referred to are 30th and 38th and we can include the 14th and 31st also of the hymn.[3]

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1. पुनर्मनः पुनरायुर्म आगन् पुनः प्राणः पुनरात्मा मऽआगन् पुनश्चक्षुः पुनः श्रोत्रम्मऽआगन् । वैश्वानरोऽअदब्धस्तनूपाऽअग्निर्नः पातु दुरितादवद्यात् ।
(Yv. IV. 15)

2. आ यो धर्माणि प्रथमः ससाद ततो वपूंषि कृणुषे पुरूणि ।
धास्युर्योनिं प्रथम आ विवेशा यो वाचमनुदितां चिकेत ॥ (Av. V. 1. 2)

3. को ददर्श प्रथमं जायमानमस्थन्वन्तं यदनस्था बिभर्ति ।
भूम्या असुरसृगात्मा क्व स्वित् को विद्वांसमुपगात् प्रष्टुमेतत् ॥ (4)
अनच्छये तुरगातु जीवमेजद् ध्रुवं मध्य आ पस्त्यानाम् ।
जीवो मृतस्य चरति स्वधाभिरमर्त्यो मर्त्येना सयोनिः ॥ (30)
अपश्यं गोपामनिपद्यमानमा च परा च पथिभिश्चरन्तम् ।
स सध्रीचीः स विषूचीर्वसान आ वरीवर्ति भुवनेष्वन्तः ॥ (31)
अपाङ् प्राङेति स्वधया गृभीतोऽमर्त्यो मर्त्येना सयोनिः ।
तां शश्वन्ता विषूचीना वियन्ता न्यन्यं चिक्युर्न नि चिक्युरन्यम् ॥ (38)
(Ṛv. I. 164. 4, 30, 31, 38)

The earlier verse (4) puts forward a riddle, "who has ever seen the precise mode in which boneless soul, the very life-blood and informing spirit of the earth, comes to inhabit a body tenement ?" On this the text says categorically that this breathing, speedful, moving life-principle is firmly established inside the tenements of clay (30). Moreover, he tells us that the immortal principle, conjoined with the mortal one, moves *backwards* and *forwards* by virtue of its natural power (the intrinsic potentiality—*svadha*), but the wonder of it is, the text goes on to say, that the mortal and immortal elements keep moving ceaselessly in opposite directions, with the result that people are able to see the one, but unable to see the other.

In fact, the two verses (30 and 38) were referred to by Roth, Böhtlingk and Geldner as against Oldenberg who held that there is no mention of eschatology in the Ṛgveda. Roth and others are right in regarding that the verses tell us that the soul is moving, speedful life-principle which comes and goes, moves backwards, comes in contact with the body and then moves from it in the opposite direction. Sayana also refers this verse (38) to eschatology.[1]

The infinitesimal soul with almost zero spatial dimensions is bound to the ever-growing body since conception. The body grows whilst the soul maintains its infinitesimality. Seated in a cavity, somewhere at the centre of receptive and directing communications, it functions in a most wonderful way, difficult to comprehend. What binds it to the body is a mystery. This binding force in the Vedic terminology is expressed by the term "*varunapasa*" (noose of King Varuna, the Law abider Lord, that presides over the destiny of all the

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1. अपाङ्ति अशुक्लं कर्म कृत्वाधो गच्छति प्राङेति ऊर्ध्वं स्वर्गादिलोकं प्राप्नोति परमात्मैव सूक्ष्मशरीरोपाधिकः सन् नानाविधं कर्म कृत्वा तद् भोगाय जीवसंज्ञां लब्ध्वा शरीरत्रयेण सम्बद्धो लोकान्तरेषु संचरति स्थूलसूक्ष्मोभय-शरीरपरिग्रहेण लोके गुणत्रयान्वितः सन् परिभ्रमति तथा च श्रूयते—गुणान्वयो यः फलकर्मकर्ता कृतस्य तस्यैव स चोपभोक्ता।

(Sayana)

mortals). The Rgvedic text (I. 24.6-15) refers to King Varuna and His three types of *pasas* (nooses),—the highest category (*uttama*), of the lowest category (*adhama*) and of the middle category (*madhyama*),[1]—the noose of the first type leads the soul to acquire the supreme virtue; this has to be tightened up (*ut*); the noose of the lowest category has to be thrown down (*ava*) and the one of the middle category has to be half-way loosened (*visrathaya*).[1]

Varuna-pasa is not a kind of dropsy as Wilson or Griffith refers to. Varuna presides over the destiny of mortals. He alone knows what is best in our interests. He provides us with the fetters of body, house of clay as if, and He alone guides us through the process of liberation. We crave for the mercy and His mercy alone.

1. Let me not yet, King Varuna, enter into the house of clay ; have mercy, spare me, mighty Lord.

2. When thunderer, I move along tremulous like a wind-blown skin ; have mercy, spare me, mighty Lord.

3. O bright and powerful God, through want of strengh, I erred and went astray ; have mercy, spare me, mighty Lord.

4. Thirst finds your worshipper though he stands in the midst of water-floods ! Have mercy, spare me, mighty Lord.

5. O Varuna, whatever the offence may be which we as men commit against the heaven host, when through our want of thought, we violate thy

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1. उदुत्तमं वरुणपाशमस्मदवाधमं विमध्यमं श्रथाय ।
अथा वयमादित्य व्रते तवानागसो अदितये स्याम ॥ (Ṛv. I. 24. 15)

laws, punish us not, O God, for that iniquity.[1] (Ṛv. VII.89. 1-5)

Varuna, the law-abider Lord, discovers our untruth and helps us in getting rid of it also[2] (Ṛv. VII .28.4). We have again a text :

While we abide in these fixed habitations, and from the lap of Aditi (Lord the Infinity) win favour, may Varuna untie the bond that binds us ; may you all preserve us ever more with blessings.[3]

Man and His Kinship

The doctrine of eschatology or of re-incarnation establishes a kinship between the far wide-spread organic species, from tiny insects to gigantic paleontological wild life, not by the way of biological heredity but another type of our own heredity, the life history which we all of us individually had in our previous lives. Our life, that we lead today has, of course, the biological heredity of our parents, forefathers etc. with definite ancestoral characteristics repeated in the series. (Negro's children continue to be Negro ; very often the parental diseases pass on to the posterity). But then in addition, my present life also depends on what I was in my previous life, and the lives that preceded that one. This is another heredity which cannot be denied. Our present life is a resultant of all these histories.

This metaphysical background of the universal kin-

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1. मोषु वरुण मृन्मयं गृहं राजन्नहं गमम् । मृळा सुक्षत्र मृळय ॥
यदेमि प्रस्फुरन्निव दृतिर्न ध्मातो अद्रिवः । मृळा सुक्षत्र मृळय ॥
क्रत्वः समह दीनता प्रतीपं जगमा शुचे । मृळा सुक्षत्र मृळय ॥
अपां मध्ये तस्थिवांसं तृष्णाविदज्जरितारम् । मृळा सुक्षत्र मृळय ॥
यत् किं चेदं वरुण दैव्ये जनेऽभिद्रोहं मनुष्याश्चरामसि ।
अचित्ती यत् तव धर्मा युयोपिम मा नस्तस्मादेनसो देव रीरिषः ॥ (Ṛv. VII. 89. 1-5)
2. प्रति यच्चष्टे अनृतमनेना अव द्विता वरुणो मायी नः सात् । (Ṛv. VII .28. 4)
3. ध्रुवासु त्वासु क्षितिषु क्षियन्तो व्यस्मत् पाशं वरुणो मुमोचत् ।
अवो वन्वाना अदितेरुपस्थाद् यूयं पात स्वस्तिभिः सदा नः ॥ (Ṛv. VII. 88.7)

ship justifies the interest taken by the Vedic texts whilst referring to the vast fauna, which surrounds the terrestrial man. He is not born alone on this earth ; there are thousands of species like his one on this globe. Life is not only on this globe; there are thousands of galaxies in the universe, and nobody knows how many of them would be having favourable conditions of temperature, pressure, humidity and environments favourable for the existence of life of the terrestrial form (or some other form even).

The Vedic texts very frequently refer to the animal life. The animal is *pasu* (the perceiving creature, one with some sorts of organs of perception). These terrestrial creatures are usually classified under three heads : *gramya* or cattle, *Aranya* (आरण्य) or wild, and *vayavya* (of the midspace, or of air, i.e. such as can fly). There is equally rich sea-life, or the entire life that flourishes under water.

The Yajurveda devotes an entire chapter (Twenty-fourth) on the selected animal life, classified in its own way and devoted to various deities : Prajapati, Agni, Sarasvati, Asvins (twins), Soma-Pusan, Surya-yama, Tvastṛ, Vayu, Indra, visnu (1) ; to Soma, Varuna, Savitṛ, Bṛhaspati and Mitra-Varuna (2) ; to Asvins, Rudra-Pasupati, Yama, Rudra and Parjanya (3) ; to Marut, Sarasvati, Tvastṛ, Indra-Agni, Usas; (4) to Visvedevah, Vak, Aditi, Dhatṛ and Devapatni (5); to Agni, Vasu, Rudra, Adityas and Parjanya (6) ; to Indra-Visnu, Indra-Bṛhaspati, Agni-Maruts and Pusan (7) ; to Indra-Agni, Agni-Soma, Agni-Visnu, Mitra-Varuna (8) ; to Agni, Soma, Vayu, Aditi and Dava-patni (9) ; to Bhumi, Antariksa, Divi, Vidyut and Taraka (10) ; to Vasanta, Grisma, Varsa, Sarad, Hemanta and Sisira (11) ; to Gayatri, Tristubh, Jagati, Anustup and Usnik (12) ; to Viraja, Bṛhati, Kakubh, Pankti and Ati-Chandas (13), and the description goes on in this strain over 40 verses, with a list of six hundred and nine animals (327 domestic+282 wild). It starts with *asva* (horse) ; *tupara* (hornless goat) *gomṛga* (gayal), and ends with *khadga* (rhinoceros), *sva kṛsnah* (black dog), *gardabha* (ass or donkey), *taraksu* (hyena), *sukara* (boar), *simha*, (lion), *kṛkalasa* (chameleon), *pippaka*, (vulture) and *pṛsata* (spotted antelope). In the

list we have creatures like mosquito and black-bee, and big animals like buffalo, lion, elephant and camel, and the list includes aquatic life too. The society, inspired with the Vedic culture, was very much fond of animal life, wild, marine and domestic, and it used to have public display of this life on sacred occasions (animal-museums, zoo-fairs, and wild life preserves).

The references to the animals, domestic and wild, destructive and serviceable, occur in the Ṛgveda also. An entire hymn (I.191) is devoted to this subject ; it not only refers to scorpions and snakes but also to tiny little insects and pests which are damaging to human culture, and which are fortunately destroyed on exposure to solar radiations. Such creatures, visible or invisible, are known as *raksas* and *yatudhanas*, and they flourish in darkness, particularly in damp places. Human society has to put up a fight against such creatures if it has to survive. Here is a poetic description for a devastating campaign against these malignant creatures :

> The fiend, O Agni, who designs to injure the essence of our food, kine, steeds and bodies, may he, the adversary, thief and robber, sink to destruction, both himself and offspring.[1] (10)

> The prudent finds it easy to distinguish the true (friendly to mankind) and false (enemy to our interests); their words oppose each other. Of these two that which is true and honest, *soma* protects, and brings the false to nothing.[2] (12)

> Destroy the fiend shaped like an owl or owlet, destroy him in the form of dog or cuckoo, destroy him shaped as eagle or as vultures ; as with a stone,

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1. यो नो रसं दिप्सति पित्वो अग्ने यो अश्वानां यो गवां यस्तनूनाम् ।
रिपुः स्तेनः स्तेयकृद्दभ्रमेतु नि ष हीयतां तन्वा तना च ॥
(Rv. VII. 104. 10)

2. सुविज्ञानं चिकितुषे जनाय सच्चासच्च वचसी पस्पृधाते ।
तयोर्यत् सत्यं यतरदृजीयस्तदित् सोमोऽवति हन्त्यासत् ॥ (Rv. VII. 104. 12)

Indra, crush the demon[1] (22) (Ṛv VII. 104).

This is a wonderful hymn with double meanings. On the metaphysical and spiritual plane, it refers to the destruction of whatever is evil, untruth or false and to support all that is good, true and virtuous. On the other hand, it is an attack on those people also who possess fiend-like characteristics of owl, dog, eagle or vultures and who cause a damage to the peaceful and god-loving society. It also refers to the eradication of those creatures, small or big, which spread diseases and cause the destruction of human society. For this, see Krimi-jambhanam and Kriminasanam Suktas of the Atharvaveda (Av. II, Suktas 31 and 32; also IV. 38; V. 23).

> May our Lord eradicate all the suicidal germs and pests in society, from our hilly tracts, forests, plants, from water and the parasites from our cattle and from our own bodies[2] (Av. II. 31. 5).

The Vedic culture refers to man in his family,—the man as a social being. He is not an individual; he has to play a very important role as a component of the society, the state and the fraternity. Man's family not only includes men, but a few demesticated creatures also, known as *gramya-pasu* or cattle with the total five. The five cattle are : *asva* (horse), *go* (cow) , *aja* (goat), *avi* (ewe) and *manusya* (man) :

> From the *yajna* or cosmic sacrifice were produced curds and butter. From the same were born animals of three categories: (i) *vayavya* (flying animals of midspace), (ii) *gramya* (cattle or domesticated), and (iii) *aranya* (wild)[3] (Ṛv. X. 90. 8).

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1. उलूकयातुं शुशुलूकयातुं जहि श्वयातुमुत कोकयातुम् ।
सुपर्णयातुमुत गृध्रयातुं दृषदेव प्र मृण रक्ष इन्द्र ॥ (Ṛv. VII. 104. 22)
2. ये क्रिमयः पर्वतेषु वनेष्वोषधीषु पशुष्वप्स्वन्तः ।
ये अस्माकं तन्वमाविविशुः सर्वं तद्धन्मि जनिम क्रिमीणाम् ॥ (Av. II. 31. 5)
3. तस्माद् यज्ञात् सर्वहुतः संभृतं पृषदाज्यम् ।
पशून् तांश्चक्रे वायव्यान् आरण्यान् ग्राम्याश्च ये ॥ (Ṛv. 10. 90. 8)

> From the same were produced animls having two rows of teeth: horse, cow, goat and sheep[1] (Ṛv. X. 90. 10).

From the cosmic *yajna* were born men, who were classified into four categories : the *brahmanas* (the intellectuals who constitute the head of the society); the *ksattriyas* (the warriors or people of defence, who represent the arms of the society); the *vaisyas* (businessmen, agriculturists, people of commerce, who represent the thighs of the society) and finally, the *sudras* (labour class, which represents the feet of the society)[2] (Rv. X. 90. 12).

In some of the texts, the word *cattle* is not confined to the four animals, horse, cow, sheep and goat (besides man himself), a few more animals have been added to the list like camel, elephant, dog or donkey. They constitute the human family, and deserve kindness, care, protection and affection. The Atharvaveda deals with a "Pasu-Samvardhana Sukta" (Av. II. 26) for animal husbandry.[3]

> Hither let the cattle come that went away, whose companionship, *vayu* (the wind) enjoyed; whose form- givings *tvastṛ* knows; in this cow-stall let *savitṛ* make them fast. (1)
>
> Together, together let cattle flow, together horses and together men, together the fatness that is of grain; I offer with an oblation of confluence. (3) (Av. II. 26. 1, 3)

A special hymn of the Atharvaveda (II.34) hints at

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1. तस्मादश्वा अजायन्त ये के चोभयादतः ।
गावो ह जज्ञिरे तस्मात् तस्माज्जाता अजावयः ॥ (Ṛv. X. 90. 10)

2. ब्राह्मणोऽस्य मुखमासीद् बाहू राजन्यः कृतः ।
ऊरू तदस्य यद् वैश्यः पद्भ्यां शूद्रो अजायत ॥ (Ṛv. X. 90. 12)

3. एह यन्तु पशवो ये परेयुर्वायुर्येषां सहचारं जुजोष ।
त्वष्टा येषां रूपधेयानि वेदास्मिन् तान् गोष्ठे सविता नियच्छतु ॥ (1)
सं सं स्रवन्तु पशवः समश्वाः समु पूरुषाः ।
सं धान्यस्य या स्फातिः संस्राव्येण हविषा जुहोमि ॥ (3) (Av. II. 26. 1, 3)

bipeds (*dvipadas*) and quadrupeds (*catuspda*) cattle[1] (Av. II. 34.1). All these *gramya* (domesticated) cattle deserve our care and attention[2] (Av. II, 34.4). We have a reference to land animals (*parthivah*), celestial (*divyah*), wild (*aranyah*), domesticated (*gramyah*), without wings (*apaksah*), and with wings or birds (*paksinah*).[3]

The Atharvaveda gives a detailed account of creatures and insects which are damaging to human society and to cattle and which deserve to be taken care of (see Av.XI.10) We give here the translation of some verses from Griffith for casual reference :[4]

> Let those who hear an evil name, in air, in heaven, on earth, and men,
>
> After *trisandhi's* will, revere your power, the sway that knowledge gives, together with your ruddy flags. (2)
>
> Let those with iron faces, with faces like needles or like combs,

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1. य ईशे पशुपतिः पशूनां चतुष्पदामुत यो द्विपदाम् । (Av. II. 34. 1)
2. ये ग्राम्याः पशवो विश्वरूपा विरूपाः सन्तो बहुधैकरूपाः ।
   वायुष्टानग्रे प्र मुमोक्तु देवः प्रजापतिः प्रजया संरराणः ॥ (Ṛv. II. 34. 4)
3. पार्थिवा दिव्याः पशव आरण्या ग्राम्याश्च ये ।
   अपक्षाः पक्षिणश्च ये ते जाता ब्रह्मचारिणः ॥ (Av. XI. 5. 21)
4. ईशां वो वेद राज्यं त्रिषंधे अरुणैः केतुभिः सह ।
   ये अन्तरिक्षे ये दिवि पृथिव्यां ये च मानवाः ॥
   त्रिषंधेस्ते चेतसि दुर्णामान उपासताम् । (2)
   अयोमुखाः सूचीमुखा अथो त्रिकङ्कतीमुखाः ।
   क्रव्यादो वातरंहस आ सजन्त्वमित्रान् वज्रेण त्रिषंधिना । (3)
   अन्तर्धेहि जातवेद आदित्य कुणपं बहु ।
   त्रिषंधेरियं सेना सुहितास्तु मे वशे ॥ (4)
   धूमाक्षी सं पततु कृधुकर्णी च क्रोशतु ।
   त्रिषंधेः सेनया जिते अरुणाः सन्तु केतवः ॥ (7)
   अवायन्तां पक्षिणो ये वयांस्यन्तरिक्षे दिवि ये चरन्ति ।
   श्वापदो मक्षिकाः सं रभन्तामामादो गृध्राः कुणपे रदन्ताम् ॥ (8) (Av. XI. 10)

(Trisandhi, i. e. composed of three parts or members; the personification of an arrow consisting of shaft, steel and point—Ait. Br. I. 25)

Flesh eaters, rapid as the wind, cling closely to our foemen with *trisandhi* for their thunderbolt. (3)

Omniscient Aditya, make full many a corpse to disappear; let this devoted army of *trisandhi* be in my control. (4)

Down let the dim-eyed demon fly, and let her short-eared sister shriek; red be the banners when the host of *arbudi* (or *trisandhi*) hath won the day. (7)

Let all the birds that move on the wings come downward, fowls that roam the heavens and air's mid-region.

Let beasts of prey and flies attack, and vultures that eat raw flesh mangle and gnaw the carcase. (8) (Av.XI.10.8).

The Bhumi Sukta (hymn pertaining to mother Earth), of the Atharvaveda has also a reference to serpents, scorpions and wild animals like boar, lions, tigers, wolves etc.

Thy snake. thy sharply stinging scorpion, lying concealed, bewildered, chilled with cold winter,

The worm, O *pṛthivi*, each thing that in the rains revives and stirs,

Creeping, forbear to creep on us ! with all things gracious bless thou us. (46)

Supporting both the foolish and weighty, she bears the death of the good and evil.

In friendly concord with the boar, Earth opens herself for the wild swine that roams the forest. (48)

All sylvan beasts of thine, that love the woodlands, man-eaters, forest-hunting, lions, tigers,

Hyena, wolf, misfortune, ill-things, drive from us, chase the demons to a distance.[1] (49)

Similarly, in the verse 51, we have a reference to the winged bipeds, birds, swans and eagles.[2]

Flora and Medicinal Herbs

Just as the Veda speaks in details about the wide-spread fauna on the terrestrial region of God's creation, so it speaks of flora also. Lord Himself is *vanaspati*, the Master of Forests, and plants are also known as *vanaspati* (Av. III.8) and He has created tall forest trees, *virudha* and *vṛksa*, *osadhi*, the medicinal herbs,[3] which sustain our life, *is*, the food grains, *vajam*, the cereals, *lata*, the creepers, the fruit trees and non-fruit bearing trees. There is a full Osadhi hymn, in the Ṛgveda, which describes herbs, known as *asvavati*, *somavati*, *urjayanti*, herbs bearing flowers and fruit, and such herbs also as do not bear them.[4] (Ṛv.X.97 ; also Yv. XII.74-101).

The Atharvaveda refers to several cures with medi-

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1. यस्ते सर्पो वृश्चिकस्तृष्टदंश्मा हेमन्तजब्धो भृमलो गुहाशये ।
क्रिमिर्जिन्वत् पृथिवि यद्यजेति प्रावृषि तन्नः सर्पन् मोप सृपद्
यच्छिवं तेन नो मृड ।। (46)
मल्वं बिभ्रती गुरुभृद् भद्रपापस्य निधनं तितिक्षुः ।
वराहेण पृथिवी संविदाना सूकराय विजिहीते मृगाय ।। (48)
ये त आरण्याः पशवो मृगा वने हिताः सिंहा व्याघ्राः पुरुषादश्चरन्ति ।
उलं वृकं पृथिवि दुच्छुनामित ऋक्षीकां रक्षो अप बाधयास्मत् ।। (49) (Av. XII. 1)
2. यां द्विपादः पक्षिणः संपतन्ति हंसाः सुपर्णाः शकुना वयांसि । (Av. XII. 1. 51)
3. इमां खनाम्योषधिं वीरुधं बलवत्तमाम् । (Ṛv. X. 145. 1)
4. या ओषधीः पूर्वा जाता देवेभ्यस्त्रियुगं पुरा ।
मनै न बभ्रूणामहं शतं धामानि सप्त च ।। (1)
शतं वो अम्ब धामानि सहस्रमुत वो रुहः ।
अधा शतक्रत्वो यूयमिमं मे अगदं कृत ।। (2)
अश्वावतीं सोमावतीमूर्जयन्तीमुदोजसम् ।
आवित्सि सर्वा ओषधीरस्मा अरिष्टतातये ।। (7)
या फलिनीर्या अफला अपुष्पा याश्च पुष्पिणीः ।
बृहस्पतिप्रसूतास्ता नो मुञ्चन्त्वंहसः ।। (15) (Ṛv. X. 97)
(These verses also occur in Yv. XII. 75-89)

cinal herbs and otherwise also. The cure for bleeding or haemorrhage has been suggested in Av. II. 3. Water itself is a cure in several maladies (Av. I. 4-6; III. 13; VI. 23, 24; VI.57).For *apamarga* (अपामार्ग), see Av. IV.17-19; for *pippali* (पिप्पली), Av. VI.109; for *madhula* (मधुला), Av. V. 15.5; for *pata* (पाटा) Av. II. 27. 4. The medicinal herb, *pṛsniparni* (पृश्निपर्णी) has been described in Av. II. 25.

The hazard of tuberculosis (*yaksma*) has been described in several hymns (Av. I. 12; II.33; III. 7, 31; VI. 20, 85, 91, 127; XII. 2; XVII. 23; XIX. 38; XX. 96).

Laksa (lac) has been described in Av. V. 5.

Ṛtajata (ऋतजाता), *ṛtavari* (ऋतावरी), and *madhula* (particularly *madhula*) may also be medicinal herbs (Av. V. 15. 1.). In connection with an eye-treatment (*aksi-roga*, AV. VI. 16), a reference is made to *abayu* (आबयु), *anabayu* and its *karambha* or extract or mixture. *Vihahla* (विहह्ल) is said to be the father of *abayu* and his mother is *madavati* (मदावती). There are certain terms of uncertainty; they may or may not represent diseases; *tauvilika* (तौविलिका) is the name of an infection, producing certain diseases; *nirala* (निराल) is also a disease. In connection with these ailments, mention has been made of *alsala* (अलसाला), *silanjala* (सिलांजाला) and *nilagalasala* (नीलागलसाला), which may be grain creepers (Av. VI. 16. 1-4). The veda also mentions a cure for the growth of hair (*keshvardhini*); *rewati* (Av. VI. 21. 3) and *nitatni* (Av. VI. 136. 1) may or may not be herbs. (see also Av. VI. 137)* There is a reference to *visanaka* (विषाणका) in reference to certain complaints (Av. VI. 44. 3). The medicinal herb *jivala* (जीवला) is referred to in Av.VI. 59. 3. Relation of particular herbs with the sun and the moon has been referred to in Av.VI.83.1[1],and *enyeka* (एन्येका), *syenyeka* (श्येन्येका) *kṛsnaika* (कृष्णैका) and *Rohini* (रोहिणी) have been mentioned in the list (Av. VI. 83.2); these terms may be separate names or adjectivals. In connection with leprosy and leucoderma, mention has been made of *asvattha* (अश्वत्थ) and for *yaksma hiranyayi* (हिरण्ययी), and *hiranya-bandhana* (हिरण्यबन्धन) (Av. VI. 95). The diseases mentioned are *vidradha* (विद्रध), *balasa*

*** Perhaps the herb for the increase of hair is kacamaci (काचमाची).**

1. सूर्य्यः कृणोतु भेषजं चन्द्रमा वोऽपोच्छतु । (Av. VI. 83. 1)

(बलास), *lohita* (लोहित) and *visalpaka* (विसल्पकं)[1]. (Av. VI. 127.1)

An important cure is *pippali* (पिप्पली), which is mentioned in a small hymn, (Av. VI. 109) of three verses. Cure for *gandamala* disease (pustules or scrofulous tumours) has been described in Av. VII. 74, 75 and 76.

The Vedic literature speaks highly of these plants and herbs; for example, we have in a verse from the Atharvaveda :

> Sweet is their root, sweet are these plants' top branches, sweet also is their intermediate portion; sweet is their foliage, and sweet their blossom, combined with sweetness is their taste of Amṛt : food, fatness let them yield, with kine-preceding.[2] (Av. VIII. 7. 12)

The plants have been spoken about in reference to health and disease :

> Let plants with flower and plants with bud,
> the fruitful, and the fruitless all,
> Like children of one mother, yield their stores
> for this man's perfect health.[3] (AV. VIII. 7. 27)

It is not only man that has the familiarity with plant kingdom for health and cure, the animals have perhaps a priority over man in this context. For we have :

> Well doth the wild boar know a plant, the mungoose knows the healing herb.
> I call, to aid this man, the plants which serpents and Gandharvas know.[4] (23)

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1. विद्रधस्य बलासस्य लोहितस्य वनस्पते ।
   विसल्पकस्योषधे मोच्छिष पिशितं चन ॥ (Av. VI. 127. 1)
2. मधुमत् पर्णं मधुमत् पुष्पमासां मधोः संभक्ता ।
   अमृतस्य भक्षो घृतमन्नं दुह्रतां गोपुरोगवम् ॥ (Av. VIII. 7. 12)
3. पुष्पवतीः प्रसूमतीः फलिनीरफला उत ।
   संमातर इव दुह्रामस्मा अरिष्टतातये ॥ (Av. VIII. 7. 27)
4. वराहो वेद वीरुधं नकुलो वेद भेषजीम् ।
   सर्पा गन्धर्वा या विदुस्ता अस्मा अवसे हुवे ॥ (Av. VIII. 7. 23)

Plants of Angirasas which hawks,
celestial plants which eagles know;
Plants known to swans and lesser fowl,
plants known to all the birds that fly;
Plants that are known to sylvan beasts,
I call them all to aid this man.[1] (24)

Inspired from the contents of the Vedic hymns, the ancient sages of the Himalayas explored the entire flora, for they had read in the Vedic verses the curative specialities of plants :

Hitherward unto thee I bring the plants,
that cure all maladies,
All plants wherein physicians have
discovered health-bestowing power.[2] (26)

The Atharvaveda, in all mentions about 110 plants, identified and non-identified, used in cure of various body ailments, and most of these remedies did come to occupy very significant places in the Ayurvedic literature of later periods in India and abroad.

A few of them are listed below :

अजश्रृंगी	Ajasṛngi IV. 37. 2, 6
अपामार्ग	Apamarga IV. 17. 6
अर्क (पैद्व)	Arka (paidva)
अर्जुन	Arjuna II. 8. 3
अश्वत्थ	Asvattha III. 6. 5
असिक्नि	Asikni I. 23. 1
औक्षगन्धी	Auksagandhi IV. 37. 3
औदुम्बर	Audumbara XIX. 31. 2
कन्या, कन्यला	Kanya, Kanyala, V. 53; I. 14. 2

1. याः सुपर्णा आंगिरसीर्दिव्या या रघटो विदुः ।
वयांसि हंसा विदुर्याश्च सर्वे पतत्रिणः ।
मृगा या विदुरोषधीस्ता अस्मा अवसे हुवे ॥ (Av. VIII. 7. 24)

2. यावतीषु मनुष्या भेषजं भिषजो विदुः । तावतीर्विश्वभेषजीराभरामि त्वामभि ॥
(Av. VIII. 7. 26)

करम्भ	Karambha IV. 7. 3
कल्याणी	Kalyani V. 17. 12
काण्डविष	Kandavisa X. 4. 22
कुमारिका	Kumarika X. 4. 14
कुष्ठ	Kustha V. 4. 1
केशवर्धनी	Kesavardhani VI. 21. 3
गान्धारी	Gandhari V. 22. 14
गुल्गुलु	Gulgulu II. 36. 7; IV. 37. 3
घृताची	Ghṛtaci IX. 1. 4
चीपुद्रु	Cipudru VI. 127. 2
जीवन्ती	Jivanti III. 14. 6
जीवल	Jivala X. 6. 3; XIX. 39. 3.
तरूणक	Tarunaka X. 4. 2
तस्तुव	Tastuva V. 13. 11
ताबुव	Tabuva V. 13. 10
तिलपिञ्जी	Tilapinji II. 8. 3
तौदी	Taudi X. 4. 24
दशवृक्ष	Dasavṛksa II. 9. 1
नघारिष	Nagharisa VIII. 2. 6
नलदी	Naladi IV. 37. 3
पाटा	Pata II. 27. 4
पिप्पली	Pippali VI. 109. 1
पृश्निपर्णी	Pṛsniparni II. 25. 3
पैद्व	Paidva X. 4. 5
प्रमन्दनी	Pramandani IV. 37. 3
भूरिमूल दर्भ	Bhurimula darbha VI. 43. 2
मगंध	Magadha V. 22. 14
मधुला	Madhula V. 15. 1
मधुश्चुत	Madhuscuta VII. 58. 2
मुनिदेवमूल	Munidevamula VII. 78. 1
यवपलाली	Yavapalali VIII. 6. 2
रामा	Rama I. 23. 1
रोपणाका	Ropanaka I. 22. 4
रोहणी-रोहिणी	Rohani-rohini IV. 12. 1; XIII. 1. 22
लाक्षा	Laksa V. 5. 7
वचस्	Vacas VIII. 7. 7.
विश्वरूपा	Visvarupa IV. 34. 8
सहदेवी	Sahadevi XII. 4. 23
हारिद्रव	Haridrava I. 22. 4

Man and Society

Man is not an individual ; he belongs to a family, and the family belongs to the society. The concept of society (samaja, समाज) is different from the concept of herd or group (samaja, समज); some of the insects, including bees, have a highly evolved, instinctively inspired social organization; even the wild beasts prefer to live and sometimes function in small groups. But man primarily lives for the society, and the society nourishes him.

Society begins with the pairing of an individual with his or her mate; and for this purpose, the Vedic literature provides for a highly evolved concept of married life. In the Vedic society, the marriage and its philosphy is not an anthropological evolution, from primitivism to the present day variations and modifications. The Vedic verses have, from the earliest days been inspiring for a highly evolved concept of family. The Vedic verses have their own characteristic style in laying down these concepts. One may refer to the Hymn 85 of Book X of the Ṛgveda (the same occurring with modification in the Atharva, Book XIV). Savitri Surya (सूर्या) is the *ṛsika* (or the inspired lady interpreter) of the hymn. Again, *surya* is an ideal lady in general who is going to be married. Savitṛ (the sun as if) gave Surya to a worthy husband. Soma is a worthy *brahmacarin*, who is highly accomplished and fully matured for the married life; and so is Surya, his fiancee. Soma and Surya are not historical persons; all of us, the males, ripe for the marriage are *somas*, and the damsel maidens are *suryas* and both of them have the cosmic counterpart also. I shall quote a few verses from the Ṛgveda for the cosmic counterpart :

सत्येनोत्तभिता भूमिः सूर्येणोत्तभिता द्यौः ।
ऋतेनादित्यास्तिष्ठन्ति दिवि सोमो अधिश्रितः ॥
Earth is upheld by truth; heaven is upheld
by the sun; the Adityas are supported by *sacrifice* (*yajna*);
Soma is supreme in heaven. (1)

वायु: सोमस्य रक्षिता समानां मास आकृति: ।
Vayu is the guardian of Soma, the maker of years and months. (5)

रैभ्यासीदनुदेयी नाराशंसी न्योचनी ।
सूर्याया भद्रमिद् वासो गाथयैति परिष्कृतम् ॥
Raibhi, was her (Surya's) companion;
Narasamsi her slave; Surya's lovely dress
was adorned by Gatha. (6)

चित्तिरा उपबर्हणं चक्षुरा अभ्यञ्जनम् ।
द्यौर्भूमि: कोश आसीद् यदयात् सूर्या पतिम् ॥
Citti was the pillow, the eye was the collyrium;
heaven and earth were the boss when Surya went
to her husband. (7)

स्तोमा आसन् प्रतिधय: कुरीरं छन्द ओपश: ।
सूर्याया अश्विना वराऽग्निरासीत् पुरोगव: ॥
Hymns were the cross-bars (of the car);
the Kurira metre was the thong of the whip;
the Asvins were Surya's groomsmen;
Agni was the leader of the procession. (8)

सोमो वधूयुरभवदश्विनास्तामुभा वरा ।
सूर्यां यत्पत्ये शंसन्तीं मनसा सवितादात् ॥
Soma was desirous of a bride; the two Asvins were the two groomsmen when Savitṛ gave Surya who was ripe for a husband, (to Soma) endowed with intelligence. (9)

सूर्याया वहतु: प्रागात् सविता यमवासृजत् ।
अघासु हन्यन्ते गावोऽर्जुन्यो: पर्युह्यते ॥
Surya's bridal procession which
Savitr despatched has advanced;
the oxen were whipped along in the
magha (constellations);
she is borne (to her husband's
house) in the Arjuni (constellations). (13)

What happens on a cosmic scale in astral regions, also happens when a bride is married to a worthy counterpart

and she proceeds to husband's home. Many of these verses have become the basis of marriage rituals in Indian families. The bride is richly dressed and decorated and is offered to the bridegroom. We have some of the verses such :

आशसनं विशसनमथो अधिविकर्तनम् ।
सूर्यायाः पश्य रूपाणि तानि ब्रह्मा तु शुन्धति ॥
Behold the forms of Surya; the *asasana* (आशसन, the border cloth), the *visasana* (विशसन, head-cloth), the *adhivikartana* (अधिविकर्तन, divided skirt); of these the Brahman relieves her. (35)

The bride and bridegroom come to the place of marriage and are felicitated by the assembly of guests and hosts :

सुमङ्गलीरियं वधूरिमां समेत पश्यत ।
सौभाग्यमस्यै दत्त्वायाऽथास्तं विपरेतन ॥
Fortunate is the bride; approach, behold her; having given her your congratulations, depart to your several homes. (33)

The bridegroom receives the hand of the bride and repeats the verses with a characteristic solemnity :

गृभ्णामि ते सौभगत्वाय हस्तं मया पत्या जरदष्टिर्यथासः ।
भगो अर्यमा सविता पुरन्धिर्मह्यं त्वादुर्गार्हपत्याय देवाः ॥
I take your hand for good fortune, that you may attain old age with me, as your husband; the Lord known as Bhaga, Aryaman, Savitṛ, Purandhi, has given you to me, that I may be the master of a household. (36)

तां पूषञ्छिवतमामेरयस्व यस्यां बीजं मनुष्या वपन्ति ।
या न ऊरू उशती विश्रयाते यस्यामुशन्तः प्रहराम शेपम् ॥
O Lord Pusan, may you inspire her who is most auspicious; in whom men may sow seed; who most affectionate may be devoted to us, and in whom animated by desire, we may beget progeny. (37)

The married life becomes a nucleus of family, and the

benedictions are showered on the new couple,—for we have :

> इहैव स्तं मा वि यौष्टं विश्वमायुर्व्यश्नुतम् ।
> क्रीडन्तौ पुत्रैर्नप्तृभिर्मोदमानौ स्वे गृहे ॥
> Abide here together; may you never be separated; live together all your lives, sporting with sons and grand-sons happy in your own home. (42)

The newly wedded bride has a great role to play in the family, and thereby in the society, and for this we have :

> अघोरचक्षुरपतिघ्न्येधि शिवा पशुभ्यः सुमनाः सुवर्चाः ।
> वीरसूर्देवकामा स्योना शं नो भव द्विपदे शं चतुष्पदे ॥
> (Look upon your husband) with no angry eye, be not hostile to your Lord, be tender to animals, be amiable and be very glorious; be the mother of males, be devo-ted to learned people, be the bestower of happiness, be the bringer of prosperity to our bipeds and qua-drupeds. (44)

> सम्राज्ञी श्वशुरे भव सम्राज्ञी श्वश्र्वां भव ।
> ननान्दरि सम्राज्ञी भव सम्राज्ञी अधि देवृषु ।
> Be a queen to your father-in-law,
> be a queen to your mother-in-law,
> be a queen to your husband's sister,
> be a queen to your husbands brothers. (46)

Married life is a life of cohesion, co-ordination and accommodation with mutual love, affection and regards. And for this unity and harmony, the supreme Lord, the worthy people of society, and Nature's all the bounties are invoked !

> समञ्जन्तु विश्वेदेवाः समापो हृदयानि नौ ।
> सं मातरिश्वा सं धाता समु देष्ट्री दधातु नौ ॥
> May the Vishvedevas unite the hearts of both of us ; may the Apah (आपः, the omnipresent Lord, and all the cosmic fluids) unite both our hearts; may the Mataris-van (मातरिश्वन्), Dhatṛ (धाता) and the bountiful Destṛ

(देष्ट्री) unite the hearts of both of us. (47)

Marriage is not the union of two individuals (a girl and a boy); it is the union of several families, and it becomes a nucleus of harmony in the entire society. The last hymn of the Ṛgveda inspires the entire society for concordance, love, humility and well-knit affectionate discipline, which arises out of mutual respect, fondness and reverence (*Samvanana*) and also mutual understanding (*Samjnanam*).

संगच्छध्वं संवदध्वं सं वो मनांसि जानताम् ।
देवा भागं यथा पूर्वे संजानाना उपासते ।
Meet together, talk together, let your minds apprehend alike; in the like manner as the ancient people of wisdom concurring accepted their rewards in the social selfless sacrifices. (2)

समानो मंत्रः समितिः समानी समानं मनः सह चित्तमेषाम् ।
समानं मन्त्रमभिमन्त्रये वः समानेन वो हविषा जुहोमि ॥
Common be the prayer of these, common be the acquirement, common the purpose, associated by the desire. I repeat for you a common prayer, I offer for you a common oblation. (3)

समानी व आकूतिः समाना हृदयानि वः ।
समानमस्तु वो मनो यथा वः सुसहासति ॥
Common be your intention; common be your hearts; common be your thoughts so that there may be thorough union among you. (4) (Ṛv. X. 191. 2-4)

The *devata* (the title) of the verses 5-9 of Ṛv. VIII. 31 is the couple (*dampati*) or husband and wife taken together. Both of them have equal privileges and responsibilities in the society; both of them have equal rights in sacred ceremonies (prayers, *yajnas* and others), and public acts of service. For we read in the Vedic verses :

या दंपती समनसा सुनुत आ च धावत ।
देवासो नित्ययाशिरा ॥
Gods (Nature's bounties and learned people), may

the husband and wife, who with one mind offer libations and purify them and propitiate you with the Soma, ever mixed with milk. (5)

प्रति प्राशव्यां इतः सम्यञ्चा बर्हिराशाते ।
ता न वाजेषु वायतः ॥
Constantly associated, may they acquire appropriate viands; may they be able to offer sacrifice; may they never be wanting in food. (6)

पुत्रिणा ता कुमारिणा विश्वमायुर्व्यश्नुतः ।
उभा हिरण्यपेशसा ॥
Blessed with youthful and adolescent offspring, and both having their persons richly ornamented, they pass happily their whole life. (8)

The union of marriage leads to immortality if invoked with highest ideals :

वीतिहोत्राकृतद्वसू दशस्यन्तामृताय कम् ।
समूधो रोमशं हतो देवेषु कृणुतो दुवः ॥
For the sake of immortality, enjoying personal union, they (wife and husband) worship the gods. (9)

Marriage has thus not only to fulfil the biological demands in human society, it is an act of supreme sacred order.

From the concept of a family, we proceed to the concept of a community, and from that of a community to the concept of a kingdom and sovereignty, a nation, and universal brotherhood. The basis of the bondage of fraternity is mutual trust and understanding, honesty, truthfulness, austerity, peace and love. The worldly prosperity, and not the poverty, is the slogan of a mighty community. To be prosperous is not a crime but a virtue, if the prosperity does not mean exploitation of a certain section of human community. In the very first verse of the Yajurveda,[1] we

1. इषे त्वोर्जे त्वा वायवस्थ देवो वः सविता प्रार्पयतु श्रेष्ठतमाय कर्मणऽआप्यायध्वमघ्न्याऽइन्द्राय भागं प्रजावतीरनमीवाऽअयक्ष्मा मा वस्तेनऽईशत माघ शꣳसो ध्रुवाऽअस्मिन् गोपतौ स्यात् बह्वीर्यजमानस्य पशून् पाहि ॥ (Yv. I. 1.)

invoke Lord for food and fuel, i.e. for nourishment and vigour, *isa* (इष) and *urja* (ऊर्जं), i.e. for raw material and power. And no prosperity has a meaning unless we are free from pain and sickness (*an-amiva*, अनमीवा, and *ayaksma* अयक्ष्मा); and the society should not only be affluent, but should be rich in progeny and cattle. God is also known as *gopatau* (गोपतौ), Lord of cattle. Praja (प्रजा, people) and *pasu* (पशु, cattle) constitute an evolved society. The object of a married life is to accomplish *isa* and *urja* (food and fuel), *rayaspasa* (abundant wealth), *praja* (offspring or progeny), *mayobhava* (मयोभव, the source of delight) and for the *sakhabhava* (सखाभाव, affection and love). Through the Vedic mantras, our ṛsis were never tired of evoking Lord for such affluency.

The Vedic verses do not confine to the material wealth and material prosperity alone. When they refer to food and fuel, wealth, progeny, cattle, prosperity, viands, and such other things, they always try to elevate your thoughts from the physical realm to the internalmost supreme realm of the most abstract nature (realms of vital forces, mental complex and finally the spiritual one of the highest order). There are food and fuel of each of these realms, there is prosperity and abundance of each of these realms quite different from that of each other, and there are handicaps, lapses, and shortcomings of each of these realms, quite characteristic of their own. Thus the Vedic materialism through stages lifts you up to the highest mysticism, from childhood to adolescence of each realm. The words are the same but implications and connotations go on varying from stage to stage, from realm to realm. The Ṛgveda speaks:

> We invoke the resplendent Lord, whether He comes from this earthly region, or from the heaven above or from the vast firmament, that He may give us wealth.[1] (Ṛv. I. 6. 10)

Lord reveals to His devotee from the earthly region (*parthivat*), from the heaven (*divah*) or from vast firmament

1. इतो वा सातिमीमहे दिवो वा पार्थिवादधि ।
इन्द्रं महो वा रजसः ॥ (Ṛv. I. 6. 10)

(*mahah rajasah*) but this earth, heaven or firmament not of the cosmic realm; here one refers to the *annamaya kosa* (earthly, *parthiva*), *pranamaya kosa* (firmament, the vital realm) and *manomaya kosa* (*dyau*, mental complex).

The spiritual mystic, through his yogic exercises mounts up from the earthly region (*pṛthivi*, physical realm) to earth's mid-region (*antariksa*, vital region of *pranas*), and thence to the heaven (*dyau* of the mental realm); and finally ascends to the world of light (*svah*, *anandamaya*) and *vijnanamaya* realms); for this we have a verse in the Yajurveda :

> From earth to air's mid-region have I mounted, and from mid-air ascended up to heaven.
> From the high pitch of heaven's cope I came into the world of light.[1] (Yv. XVII. 67)

The Vedas have a cryptic beauty of expressions in a style quite characteristic of their own.

Community and Occupations

The society, organized on the lines of the Vedic tenets, has good many attractive features. The basis of the society on one hand is *brahma* and *ksattra*, knowledge and defence and on the other hand *food*, *wealth* and *prosperity*, *vajam*, *rayim*, and *rayasposa*, created with the assistance of labour (*srama* and *tapas*). And thus the society is represented by four classes of people (i) the *brahmanas* (ब्राह्मण), the learned class, serving the society by devoting itself to knowledge and learning, (ii) the *ksattriyas* (क्षत्रिय), adept in defence science for protection of the State from internal disorder and external attacks from enemies, (iii) the *vaisyas* (वैश्य), the people engaged in agriculture, trade, industry and business and thus creating wealth for the nation, and (iv) the *sudras* (शूद्र), the unskilled or partly-skilled labour to assist the three classes manually. And thus the *brahmanas* constitute the *head* or *mouth* of the society personified, the

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1. पृथिव्याऽअहमुदन्तरिक्षमारुहमन्तरिक्षाद्दिवमारुहम् ।
दिवो नाकस्य पृष्ठात् स्वर्ज्योतिरगामहम् ॥ (Yv. XVII. 67)

ksattriyas, the *arms*, the *vaisyas* the *belly* or *thighs* and the *sudras*, the two legs. The Purusa-Sukta of the Ṛgveda (X.90), and of the Yajurveda (Chapter XXXI) and of the Atharvaveda (XIX. 6) has the following verse in common :

> The *brahmana* became His mouth,
> of both His arms the *rajanya* (the *ksattriya*) was made;
> His thighs became the *vaisya*,
> and from His feet the *sudra* was produced.[1]
> (Ṛv. X. 90. 12; Yv. XXXI. 11. Av. XIX; 6. 6)

The Yajurveda envisages a cultured society, consisting of hundreds of professions and vocations to meet the needs of people. The whole chapter (Chapter XXX from verse 5 to 22) enlists in the characteristic lexiconic style more than one hundred desirable and undesirable professions : *brahmana* (the learned teacher and priest), the *ksatra* (royalty), *vaisya* (businessman), *sudra* (labourer), robber, homicide, eunuch, *ayogu* (अयोगू) a harlot, *magadha* (मागध) stable-master, public dancer, court-attendant, timid, chatterer, artist, woman-lover, damsel's son, car-builder, carpenter, potter, artificer, jeweller, sower, shaft-maker, bowyer, bow-string maker, rope maker, hunter, dog-leader, fisherman, *nisada* (निषाद), madman, *vratya* (व्रात्य), demented, untrustworthy, gambler, non-gambler, cane-splitter woman, thorn-worker woman, lover, paramour, unmarried elder brother, •younger brother, marrying earlier before the elder brother, husband of a younger sister (the elder sister still unmarried), woman embroiderer, woman dealing in love-charms, a by-sitter, an obstinate, a yielding man, hunch-back, dwarf, blear-eyed man, blind man, deaf man, physician, astronomer, inquisitive man, extra-inquisitive, question-solver, elephant-keeper, horse-keeper, cowherd, shepherd, goatherd, ploughman, dealer in beverages, house guard, possessor of wealth, door-keeper's attendant, wood-bringer, fire-kindler, besprinkler, high steward, carver, distributer,

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1. ब्राह्मणोऽस्य मुखमासीद् बाहू राजन्यः कृतः ।
   ऊरू तदस्य यद् वैश्यः पद्भ्यां शूद्रोऽजायत ॥ (Ṛv. X. 90. 12)

pourer-out, stirrer-up of strife, washer-woman, female dyer (5-12), horse-rider (13), iron-smelter, yoker, ointment-maker (14), hide-dresser, currier (15), fisherman, fish-vender, fish-catcher, *anda* (आन्द), *mainala* (मैनाल), *bhilla* (भिल्ल), *kirata* (किरात), wildman (16), goldsmith, merchant (17), gambler, a speculator in gambling, gamble manager, owner of gambling hall, *caraka-acarya* (चरकाचार्य) (18), drummer, lute-player, flute-blower, conch-blower, wood-ranger, forest-fireguard (19), village headman, watchman, lute-player, hand-clapper, flutist, musician (20), and pole-dancer (21).

Members of one and the same family were permitted to serve the society in different vocations, for we have in Vedic verse :

> I am the *karu* (carpenter, or a singer), papa is the physician, mamma throws the corn upon grinding stones; having various occupations, desiring riches we remain (in the world) like cattle (in the stalls); flow, Indu for Indra.[1] (Rv. IX. 112. 3)

According to the Vedic injunction, God's revealed knowledge (Divine Word) is meant for all, irrespective of caste, creed, race or colour. God reveals Himself through His creation, the Divine Art and the Divine Word.

> That I to all the people address this salutary speech, to priest (*brahmana*), and nobleman (*ksattriya*), *sudra*, *arya*, *vaisya*, to one of our kin and to the stranger.[2] (Yv. XXVI.2)

God's graces and gifts have no bounds and are subject to no restrictions; they have universal appeal; the sacred knowledge of the Vedas is meant for all, irrespective of birth and heritage It is unto us to derive advantage from these blessings.

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1. कारुरहं ततो भिषगुपल प्रक्षिणी नना ।
नानाधियो वसूयवोऽनु गा इव तस्थिमेन्द्रायेन्दो परि स्रव ॥ (Ṛv. IX. 112. 3)

2. यथेमां वाचं कल्याणीमावदानि जनेभ्यः ।
ब्रह्मराजन्याभ्याँ शूद्राय चार्य्याय च स्वाय चारणाय । (Yv. XXVI. 2)

Universal Friendliness and Patriotism

According to the Vedas, we are the sons of the mother Earth. In the characteristic style of the Veda, we have the following :

> Heaven (Dyau) is your father, Earth your mother, Soma your brother, Aditi your sister.[1] (Ṛv. I. 191. 6)
> Dyaus (heaven) is our father, our begetter; Kinship is here. This great Earth is our kin and mother.[2]
> (Av. IX. 10. 12)

Our kinship is due to our having a common father and a common mother, in the form of heavenly luminaries acting as our father, and the Earth as the mother.

The bondage is further strengthened by the fact that the Supreme Lord is our father and mother both. He is our Lord and we his children or sons.

The Bhumi Sukta (hymn pertaining to deified Earth) of the Atharva Veda (XII. 1) speaks thus with fervour :

> May Earth pour out her milk for us, a mother unto me, her son.[3] (XII. 1. 10)
> I am the son of Earth; Earth is my Mother; Parjanya is my sire; may he promote me.[4] (12)

> Produced from thee, on thee move mortal creatures; thou bearest them, both quadruped and biped. Thine, Pṛthivi, are these five human Races for whom, though mortal, the sun as he rises, spreads with his rays the light that is immortal.[5] (15)

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1. द्यौर्वः पिता पृथिवी माता सोमो भ्रातादितिः स्वसा । (Ṛv. I. 191. 6)
2. द्यौर्नः पिता जनिता नाभिरत्र बन्धुर्नो माता पृथिवी महीयम् । (Av. IX. 10. 12)
3. सा नो भूमिर्विसृजतां माता पुत्राय मे पयः । (Av. XII. 1. 10)
4. माता भूमिः पुत्रो अहं पृथिव्याः पर्जन्यः पिता स उ नः पिपर्तु । (Av. XII. 1. 12)
5. त्वज्जातास्त्वयि चरन्ति मर्त्यास्त्वं बिभर्षि द्विपदस्त्वं चतुष्पदः ।
तवेमे पृथिवि पञ्च मानवा येभ्यो ज्योतिरमृतं मर्त्येभ्य उद्यन्त्सूर्यो
रश्मिभिरातनोति । (Av. XII. 1. 15)

O Earth, my mother, set thou me happily in a place secure.[1] (63)

The Vedas do not speak of the narrow geographical patriotisms. Of course, for convenience we have the concept of small and big kingdoms, or states, with heads, differently known. One of the verses of the Yajurveda speaks of *rajni* (राज्ञी, queen), *virad* (विराड्), *samrad* (सम्राड्), *svarad* (स्वराड्), *adhipatni* (अधिपत्नी, queen-paramount).[2]

A verse distinguishes between *samrad* and *raja* : Indra is *samrad* (chief lord), and Varuna is *raja* (sovran)[3] (Yv. VIII. 37). According to the ritualists, the one who performs the *rajasuya yajna* is *raja*, and the one, performing the *vajapeya* is *samrad*.[4] *Raja* is inferior to *samrad*; a *raja* becomes a *samrad*, in case he performs the *vajapeya yajna*.

The word *samrad* has been translated as all ruling, and *svarad* as independent ruler[5] (Yv. XIII. 35).

The concept of kingdom (one's own state, *svakiya desa*, स्वकीय देश) is very significant. Kingdom is known as *rastra* (राष्ट्र). It may be a small state or a state extensive in dimensions; it my be what we call today a nation, a federation, a republic or a Union . We have such passages in respect to this *rastra*:

> May we be watchful (i.e. non-negligent) in the *rastra*.[6] (Yv. XI. 23)

> I take my stand on princely power and kingship.[7] (XX. 10)

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1. भूमे मातर्नि धेहि मा भद्रया सुप्रतिष्ठितम् । (Av. XII. 1. 63)
2. राज्ञ्यसि प्राची दिग् विराडसि दक्षिणा दिक् सम्राडसि प्रतीची दिक्
   स्वराडस्युदीची दिगधिपत्न्यसि बृहती दिक् ॥ (Yv. XIV. 13)
3. इन्द्रश्च सम्राड् वरुणश्च राजा । (Yv. VIII. 37)
4. राजा वै राजसूयेनेष्ट्वा भवति सम्राट् वाजपेयेन । (S Br. V. 1. 1. 13)
5. सम्राडसि स्वराडसि । (Yv. XIII. 35); सम्यग्राजत इति सम्राडसि;
   स्वेनैव राजत इति स्वराडसि । (Mahidhara)
   विराट् विविधं राजमाना; स्वराट् परनिरपेक्षं स्वयमेव राजमाना ।
   (Mahidhar on Yv. XIV. 13; see also Yv. XV. 10-13; XX. 5)
6. वय ँ राष्ट्रे जागृयाम । (Yv. IX. 23)
7. प्रति क्षत्रे प्रति तिष्ठामि राष्ट्रे । (Yv. XX. 10)

O Rastrda, may you give me the *rastra*.[1] (X. 2)

Let all the people long for thee. Let not thy kingship fall away[2] (XII.11), i. e. proper protection should be provided to the State, so that glory and prosperity (*sri* , श्री) of the State are fully retained and neither diminished nor destroyed.

The following verse from the Yajurveda refers to the aspiration of a nation; and for this reason, it may be reckoned as one of the best national anthems :

आ ब्रह्मन् ब्राह्मणो ब्रह्मवर्चसी जायतामा राष्ट्रे
राजन्यः शूरऽइषव्योऽतिव्याधी महारथो जायतां
दोग्ध्री धेनुर्वोढानड्वानाशुः सप्तिः पुरन्धिर्योषा
जिष्णू रथेष्ठा सभेयो युवास्य यजमानस्य वीरो जायतां
निकामे निकामे नः पर्जन्यो वर्षतु फलवत्यो
नऽओषधयः पच्यन्तां योग-क्षेमो नः कल्पताम् ॥ (Yv. XXII. 22)

O Supreme Lord ! May there be born in this *rastra* (the State), the learned intellectuals, illustrious for their sacred knowledge; may there be born the *rajanya* or the men of defence, heroic, skilled archers, with piercing shafts, mighty warriors; the cows giving abundant milk; the ox good at carrying; the swift courser; the industrious ladies; may this householder be blessed with a son, ever victorious, driving in the forefront, impressive in assemblies, and youthful; may we have timely rains according to our needs and desires; may our fruitbearing plants ripen; may acquisition (*yoga*) and preservation (*ksema*) of property be secured to us.

The concept of state includes the state protection from the attacks of adversaries; and therefore, it is necessary that the state should organize armies, train soldiers and equip the army with war-materials, i. e. *astra*, *sastra*,

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1. राष्ट्रदा राष्ट्रं मे देहि । (Yv. X. 2)
2. विशस्त्वा सर्वा वाञ्छन्तु मा त्वद् राष्ट्रमधिभ्रशत् । (Yv. XII. 11; SBr. VI. 7. 3. 4—श्रीर्वै राष्ट्रम् ।

food provision, vehicles, cars, horses, elephants and the like. The Vedic verses envisage wars on land, on water and in the interspace. In the interspatial conflicts, it speaks of bombers and aircrafts. The primitive warfare included the use of arrows, bows, and shafts. Indra is supposed to use as the last recourse an admantine weapon known as *vajra*. The Vedas do not speak of any historical battle or war. Some of the conflicts are quite imaginary, some of them are metaphorical, as that between *indra* (the sun) and *vrtra* (clouds), with a troop of *maruts*, brilliantly adorned with armoury, dresses and weapons. Some of the conflicts are of the mental and spiritual realms against sins, weaknesses, temptations and shortcomings. In such cases the violence of war is of another sort. The terminology of all such conflicts is very much the same. The *raksasas* (demons and devils) have to be subdued anyhow. In this context, I shall quote the translation of Wilson of only one verse from the Ṛgveda:

> To what glorifier of the gods do they (Maruts) repair with their ruddy, tawny, car-bearing horses for his advantage ? Bright as burnished gold, and armed with thunderbolt, they furrow the earth with their chariot-wheel.[1] (Rv.I.88.2)

Concept of Three Goddesses

Very often in the Ṛgveda, also in the Yajuh and Atharva, there are references to three goddesses (*tisrah devih*), *ida*, *sarasvati*, and *bharati*, also known as *mahi*.[2]

1. तेऽरुणेभिर्वरमा पिशङ्गैः शुभे कं यान्ति रथतूर्भिरश्वैः ।
   रुक्मो न चित्रः स्वधितीवान् पव्या रथस्य जङ्घनन्त भूम ॥ (Rv. I. 88. 2)
2. इळा सरस्वती मही तिस्रो देवी र्मयोभुवः ।
   बर्हिः सीदन्त्वस्रिधः । (Rv. I. 13. 9)
   सरस्वती साधयन्ती धियं न इळा देवी भारती विश्वतूर्तिः ।
   तिस्रो देवीः स्वधया बर्हिरेदमच्छिद्रं पान्तु शरणं निषद्य ॥ (Rv. II. 3. 8)
   आ भारती भारतीभिः सजोषा इळा देवैर्मनुष्येभिरग्निः ।
   सरस्वती सारस्वतेभिरर्वाक् तिस्रो देवीर्बर्हिरेदं सदन्तु ॥ (Rv. VII. 2. 8)
   तिस्रो देवीर्बर्हिरेदं सदन्त्विडा सरस्वती भारती । मही गृणाना । (Yv. XXVII. 19)
   तिस्रो देवीर्बर्हिरेदं सदन्तामिडा सरस्वती मही भारती गृणाना । (Av. V. 27. 9)

Mahi, or *bharati* is the motherland, *sarasvati* is the mother-culture or the divine knowledge, and *ida* or *ila* is the divine language or the mother tongue. Sarasvati (from *sr*, to flow; the uninterrupted flow of divine inspiration) has a relation with *dhiyah*, the discriminating instinct or intellect (*sarasvati sadhayanty dhiyam*, Ṛv.II.3.8). All these three goddesses occupy their sacred places in *barhi*, the place of sacred *yajna*, which is being performed incessantly in our human heart, the *antah karana*; the internal organ, the abode of the *atman* itself. Love and regards for the motherland, mother culture and the sacred knowledge have to be inculcated in every individual belonging to a social organization or state.

Of the three, the goddess Sarasvati is most loving and fascinating. She is vigour amongst all possessing vigour;[1] she is the inspirer of everything that is noble and sacred, and she evokes all our mental faculties.[2] She creates perturbations in the ocean of cosmic mind or *mahat-tattva*.[3] And for these reasons, the goddess Sarasvati is invoked by everyone.[4]

Ethical Concepts

Not only that God created the universe according to His divine art, and made the creation purposeful, He gave to man, the highest evolved being in His creation, the high standards of ethics. God Himself is an embodiment of ethical ideals and all noble virtues. Of course, He is an Infinite Unity, whilst the souls are infinitesimal unities in all positive parameters. Ethics is not necessarily a result of social evolution or of social necessity. The ethical ideals emanate with all their purposefulness from the divine nature of the self itself, and in case of man, they have reached a sort of climax.

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1. प्र णो देवी सरस्वती वाजेभिर्वाजिनीवती । धीनामवित्र्यवतु ॥ (Ṛv. VI. 61. 4)
2. चोदयित्री सूनृतानां चेतन्ती सुमतीनाम् । (Ṛv. I. 3. 11)
3. महो अर्णः सरस्वती प्र चेतयति केतुना धियो विश्वा विराजति ।
   (Ṛv. I. 3. 12). See also Ṛv. VI. 61. 8.
4. सरस्वतीं देवयन्तो हवन्ते सरस्वतीमध्वरे तायमाने ।
   सरस्वती सुकृतो अह्वयन्त सरस्वती दाशुषे वार्यं दात् ॥ (Ṛv. X. 17. 7)

What is the highest virtue ? Of course, the Truth itself. Truth has six synonymns in the Vedic literature : बट् । श्रत् । सत्रा । अद्धा । इत्था । ऋतमिति षट् सत्यनामानि (*bat, srat, satra; addha, ittha, ṛta* are the synonyms of *satya* or truth) (Nighantu III. 10).[1] The Satapatha Brahmana gives several parables to show that the truth came to the share of gods, whilst *asuras* adopted untruth. One has to take a vow before participating in rituals, and the vow is repeated thus in the Vedic words :

> अग्ने व्रतपते व्रतं चरिष्यामि तच्छकेयं तन्मे राध्यताम् ।
> इदमहमनृतात् सत्यमुपैमि ॥ (Yv. 1.5)
> I will observe the vow, Lord of Vows, Agni, the Lord adorable, may I have strength therefor.
> Success attend me. Now into truth from untruth do I enter.[2] (Yv. I. 5).

There is no virtue, nobler than truth; without truth, all virtues become vice. In the Vedic literature, the words *satya* and *ṛta* are used in the same sense (*anṛta*—'what is not *ṛta*—*asatya* or untruth).

The world of activity is sustained by certain virtues or ethical modes; they have been enumerated in a verse of the Atharvaveda.

> सत्यं बृहद् ऋतमुग्रं दीक्षा तपो ब्रह्म यज्ञः पृथिवीं धारयन्ति । (Av. XII 1.1)
> *Satyam, bṛhat, ṛtam, ugram, diksa, tapas, brahman* and *yajna.*

These are the eight virtues, which sustain the world. We may translate them as truth (*satya*), vastness (*bṛhat*), right attitude (*ṛtam*), formidability (*ugram*), consecration

1. For *bat* and *ittha*, Ṛv. V. 84. 1; *sraddha* is derived from *srat*. (Ṛv. X. 151; Nir. IX. 30, 31)
2. This is spoken by the sacrificer, who with his wife is about to take the prescribed *vrata* or vow of abstinence during the performance of ceremonies. Agni is said to be *vratapati*, or keeper of vows. *Truth* is reality or godhead; *untruth* is unreality, perishable humanity; whilst taking vow, the sacrificer feels that he is attaining to a divine body and is no longer a mere man. He is thus bound to speak *truth*, nothing but *truth*.

(*diksa*), austerity or penance (*tapas*), aptitude for learning (*brahman*) and dedication and service or sacrifice (*yajna*).

The word *bṛhat* has various connotations. The *ṛsis* speak of three cosmic divisions:—*pṛthivi* (earth), the *antariksa* (interspace or middle space) and *dyau* or heaven, but there is still greater heaven (*bṛhad dyau*) called also the wide world, the vast, the *bṛhad*, and typified sometimes as the Great Water, *maho arnah*, the region of cosmic intelligence. This *bṛhat* is again described as-the *ṛtam bṛhat* or in a triple term *satyam, ṛtam, bṛhat* as in our text. (Av. XII.1.1.) This is the same as *mahas*, the fourth *vyahṛti* (in the tetrad of *bhuh; bhuvah, svah* and *mahah*), introduced by the sage Mahacamasya. (See Taittiriya Up. for *mahas* I.5).

Satyam is trisyllabic, *sa-ti-yam; sa* is one syllable, *ti* another and *yam* the third. The first and the last syllables are truth (*satyam*) meaning the *real;* in the middle is the falsehood (*anṛtam*). The falsehood is embraced on both sides by truth; it partakes of the nature of truth itself. Falsehood does not injure him who knows this. (Bṛhadaranyaka Up. V. 5. 1). Of this truth, or *satyam*, the Yajuh has the verse:

> The face of the *satya* (truth or real) is hidden by a vessel formed of golden light.[1]

The ethical values of the Vedic traditions have been variously summarized and codified in the subsequent literature. For example, the Taittiriya Upanisad (I.9) refers to *ṛta* (ऋत, right or real), *satya* (सत्य, truth), *tapas* (तपस्, austerity), *dama* (दम, self-control), *sama* (शम, tranquility) and *svadhyaya-pravacana* (स्वाध्याय-प्रवचन, study and teaching). It is difficult to assign priorities in favour any of these. Satyavacas Rathitara gave priority and assigned superiority to *satya* or what is true; Taponitya Paurusisti ascribed it to *tapas* or austerity, and Naka Maudgalya to *Svadhyaya-pravacana*. Study and teaching is verily, *tapas* (Taittiriya Up. I.9).

Sacrifice leads to various attainments, since it is the most sacred act of selfless dedication. Some of these attain-

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1. हिरण्मयेन पात्रेण सत्यस्यापिहितं मुखम् । (Yv. XL. 17)

ments are enumerated in the Yajurveda as follow :

> सत्यं च मे श्रद्धा च मे जगच्च मे धनं च मे विश्वं च मे महश्च मे क्रीडा च मे मोदश्च मे जातं च मे जनिष्यमाणं च मे सूक्तं च मे सुकृतं च मे यज्ञेन कल्पताम् । (5)
> ऋतं च मेऽमृतं च मेऽयक्ष्मं च मेऽनामयच्च मे जीवातुश्च मे दीर्घायुत्वं च मेऽनमित्रं च मेऽभयं च मे सुखं च मे शयनं च मे सूषाश्च मे सुदिनं च मे यज्ञेन कल्पताम् ॥(6)
> (Yv. XVIII. 5-6)

May my truth (*satyam*), my faith (*sraddha*, an ability to accept and adopt truth for life); and my cattle, my wealth, my goods, my pleasures; and my play and my enjoyment; and my children and my future children; and my hymn and my pious act (5); my religious rite (*ṛta*) and my immortality (*amṛta*); and my freedom from consumption and from disease; and my life and my longevity; and my freedom from enemies and my freedom from danger; and my happiness, and my lying down (*sayana*), my fair dawn (*susa*), my fair day (*sudina*) prosper by sacrifice. (Yv. XVIII. 5-6)

In the Vedic terminology all that is vice, all that leads to pain, all that is ill, is known as *durita* (दुरित), and the counterpart of *durita* is known as *bhadra* (भद्र), which is virtue personified and leads to pleasure, prosperity and nobility. God is invoked for the attainment of *bhadra*, and for dispelling *durita*.

> विश्वानि देव सवितर्दुरितानि परासुव । यद्भद्रं तन्न आसुव ॥ (Ṛv. Y. 825)
> O Lord, the sustainer and creator, send far away all *duritas* (troubles, vices, calamities) and send us only what is *bhadra* (virtue and good).

Regarding this *bhadra*, we have a verse in the Ṛgveda :

> भद्रं कर्णेभिः शृणुयाम देवा भद्रं पश्येमाक्षभिर्यजत्राः । (Ṛv. I. 89.8)
> Let us hear, O Lord and learned people, with our ears, what is *bhadra* (good); let us see with our eyes what is *bhadra* (good). (Ṛv. I. 89. 8)

Brahmacarya, according to the Vedic traditions, is regarded a supreme virtue for married and unmarried

persons of both the sexes. The Atharvaveda devotes a full hymn to this subject (Av. XI. 5). The word *brahman* means the Veda or Divine Word and therefore, the word *brahmacarin* may mean the *Vedic student* (*Bloomfield*). We have in this famous hymn, some of the very significant verses :

> The *brahmacarin* fills the world with fuel, girdle, toil (*srama*) and fervour (*tapas*). (4)
>
> The *brahmacarin* goes kindled with fuel, clothing himself in the black-antelope skin, consecrated, long-bearded. (6)
>
> The *brahmacarin* defends by fervour; the whole of that he, knowing, makes *brahman* for himself. (10)
>
> By *brahmacarya*, by fervour, a king defends his kingdom; a teacher by *brahmacarya*, seeks a *brahmacarin* (a Vedic student). (17)
>
> By *brahmacarya*, a girl wins a young husband. (18)
>
> By *brahmacarya*, the gods smote away death. (19)
>
> A *brahmacarin* bears a shining *brahman*; in that are woven together all the gods (Nature's bounties); he, generating breath-and-expiration (*prana and apana*), then out-breathing (*vyana*), speech, mind, *brahman* and wisdom (*medha*).[1] (24)

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1. ब्रह्मचारी समिधा मेखलया श्रमेण लोकांस्तपसा पिपर्ति । (4)
ब्रह्मचार्येति समिधा समिद्धः कार्ष्णं वसानो दीक्षितो दीर्घश्मश्रुः । (6)
तो रक्षति तपसा ब्रह्मचारी तत् केवलं कृणुते ब्रह्म विद्वान् । (10)
ब्रह्मचर्येण तपसा राजा राष्ट्रं वि रक्षति ।
आचार्यो ब्रह्मचर्येण ब्रह्मचारिणमिच्छते ॥ (17)
ब्रह्मचर्येण कन्या युवानं विन्दते पतिम् । (18)
ब्रह्मचर्येण तपसा देवा मृत्युमुपाघ्नत । (19)
ब्रह्मचारी ब्रह्म भ्राजद् बिभर्ति तस्मिन् देवा अधि विश्वे समोताः ।
प्राणापानौ जनयन्नाद् व्यानं वाचं मनो हृदयं ब्रह्म मेधाम् ॥ (24) (Av. XI. 5)

Supreme Values of Life

Truth, non-violence austerity, brotherhood, or universal friendship, security, peace, fearlessness and dedication are necessarily some of the prime values of life of the first category, and therefore, there are innumerable prayers in the vedas through which God is invoked for such blessings.

Universal Friendship

O Lord, the dispeller of nescience, strengthen me. May all beings regard me with the eye of a friend. May I regard all beings with the eye of a friend. With the eye of a friend do we regard one another.[1]

(Yv. XXXVI. 18).

Fearlessness, Security and Safety

May air's mid-region give us peace and safety; safety may both these, Heaven and Earth, afford me. Security be ours from west, from eastward, from north and south; may we be free from danger.
Safety be ours from friend and from the unfriendly, safety from what (or whom) we know and what we know not. Safety be ours by night and in the day time. Friendly to me be all my hopes and wishes (or all my quarters).[2] (Av. XIX. 15. 5-6)

Love and Freedom from Hatred

Freedom from hate I bring to you, concord, and unanimity. Love one another as the cow loves the calf that she has borne. (1)

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1. दृते दृꣳह मा मित्रस्य मा चक्षुषा सर्वाणि भूतानि समीक्षन्ताम् ।
मित्रस्याहं चक्षुषा सर्वाणि भूतानि समीक्षे । मित्रस्य चक्षुषा समीक्षामहे ॥
(Yv. XXXVI. 18)
2. अभयं नः करत्यन्तरिक्षमभयं द्यावापृथिवी उभे इमे ।
अभयं पश्चादभयं पुरस्तादुत्तरादधरादभयं नो अस्तु ॥
अभयं मित्रादभयममित्रादभयं ज्ञातादभयं पुरो यः ।
अभयं नक्तमभयं दिवा नः सर्वा आशा मम मित्रं भवन्तु ॥ (Av. XIX. 51. 5-6)

One minded with his mother, let the son be loyal to his sire. Let the wife, calm and gentle, speak words sweet as honey to her Lord. (2)

No brother hate his brother, no sister to sister be unkind. Unanimous, with one intent, speak you your speech in friendliness.[1] (3) (Av. III. 30. 1-3)

Effort and Victory

Whilst efforts are in my right hand, sure in my left is victory. Kine winner may I be, horse-winner, riches winning, gold-winner.[2] (Av. VII. 50. 8)

Lustre, Vigour, Energy and Might

O Lord, you are lustre : give me lustre.
You are vigour : give me manly vigour.
You are strength : give me strength.
You are energy : give me energy.
You are anger : give me anger.
You are conquering might: give me might.[3]
(Yv. XIX. 9)

Supreme Intellect, Divine and Discriminating

Man is a rational being and in this respect, he is different from his biological kinship. The *manomaya kosa*

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1. सहृदयं सांमनस्यमविद्वेषं कृणोमि वः ।
अन्यो अन्यमभि हर्यत वत्सं जातमिवाघ्न्या ॥ (1)
अनुव्रतः पितुः पुत्रो मात्रा भवतु संमनाः ।
जाया पत्ये मधुमतीं वाचं वदतु शान्तिवाम् ॥ (2)
मा भ्राता भ्रातरं द्विक्षन् मा स्वसारमुत स्वसा ।
सम्यञ्चः सव्रता भूत्वा वाचं वदत भद्रया ॥ (3) (Av. III. 30. 1-3)
2. कृतं मे दक्षिणे हस्ते जयो मे सव्य आहितः ।
गोजिद् भूयासमश्वजिद् धनंजयो हिरण्यजित् ॥ (Av. VII. 50. 8)
3. तेजोऽसि तेजो मयि धेहि वीर्यमसि वीर्यं मयि धेहि ।
बलमसि बलं मयि धेहि ओजोऽस्योजो मयि धेहि ।
मन्युरसि मन्युं मयि धेहि सहोऽसि सहो मयि धेहि ॥ (Yv. XIX. 9)

(the mental sheath) of the human species is highly developed with multifarious complexities and sublimities. Man alone possesses characteristic intellect, which for him discriminates truth from what is untruth, the desirable from the undesirable. This intellect is known as *dhi* (धी) or *medha* (मेधा), a highly evolved form of it is known as *ṛtambhara prajna* (ऋतम्भरा प्रज्ञा). The seers of the Upanisads have variously described it (Taittiriya Up. II. 3). The Aitareya Upanisad uses terms like *hṛdaya* (हृदय, heart), *manas* (मनस्, mind), *samjnana* (संज्ञान, consciousness), *prajnana* (प्रज्ञान, intelligence), *medhas* (मेधस्, wisdom) *dṛsti* दृष्टि, insight) *dṛti* (दृति, steadfastness), *mati* (मति, thought), *manisa* (मनीषा, thoughtfulness), *juti* (जूति, impulse), *smṛti* (स्मृति, memory), *samkalpa* (संकल्प, conception), *kratu* (क्रतु, purpose), *asu* (असु, life), *kama* (काम, desire) and *vasa* (वश, will). (Ait. up. 5. 1.)

In the Vedic terminology, the word *medha* has wide connotation. The Yajurveda gives a group of three mantras :

> To the Assembly's wondrous Lord, to Indra's lovely friend who gives Wisdom (*medha*) have I drawn near in prayer.[1]
>
> That wisdom which the companions of gods (learned people) and fathers (elderly people of experience) recognize, even with that intelligence, O adorable Lord, make me wise today.[2]
>
> Varuna, grant me wisdom, grant it Agni and Prajapati. Wisdom may Indra, Vayu grant. May the Creator grant it me.[3] (Yv. XXXII. 13-15)

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1. सदसस्पतिमद्‌भुतं प्रियमिन्द्रस्य काम्यम् । सनिं मेधामयासिषम् ।
(Av. I. 18. 6; also Yv. XXXII. 13)

2. यां मेधां देवगणाः पितरश्चोपासते । तया मामद्य मेधयाग्ने मेधाविनं कुरु स्वाहा ।
(Yv. XXXII. 14)

3. मेधां मे वरुणो ददातु मेधामग्निः प्रजापतिः ।
मेधामिन्द्रश्च वायुश्च मेधां धाता ददातु मे स्वाहा ॥ (Yv. XXXII. 15)

The same emphasis to discriminating intellects is in the famous Gayatri or Savitri verse :

> May we attain that excellent (desirable) glory of Creator the God; So may he stimulate our intellects[1]. (Yv. XXX.. 2; Rv. III. 62. 10)

Vedas as the Source Book of Knowledge

The Vedic theism incorporates a number of concepts : (i) acceptance of the concept of the existence of supreme, infinite, omnipresent, omniscient and most venerable and adorable Lord; (ii) acceptance of the dynamic and purposeful reality of God's creation, and appreciation of the divine art, (iii) acceptance of the concept, that God reveals Himself in His creation and in His art ; and the creation is based on a uniform principle, law and order and purposefulness, and (iv) acceptance of the principle, that God is the source of all knowledge, which he reveals to man in three ways : through the divine creation; through the divine word, and through the divine inspiration ; and as such, there is no contradiction between what is observed through the study of divine creation (science), the divine word (the Vedic studies), and the divine inspiration (which comes to the chosen few in the line of their specialization, i.e. to *ṛsis* in the field of art, science and philosophy and the mystic experiences; (v) acceptance of the principle, that God Himself is the source of highest ethical values of life and (vi) acceptance of the principle, that God alone knows about His people, and awards them the fruits of their actions on their

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1. तत्सवितुर्वरेण्यं भर्गो देवस्य धीमहि । धियो यो नः प्रचोदयात् ।

(Yv. XXX. 2; Rv. III. 62. 10)

Dayananda translates *dhiyah* as *prajna*, whilst Griffith as prayers and Wilson as pious rites (*karmani*). Sir W. Jones was the first to give its translation to the English knowing Western world:

"Let us adore the supremacy of that divine Sun, the godhead, who illuminates all, who recreates all, from whom all proceed, to whom all must return, whom we invoke to direct our understandings aright in our progress towards his holy seat". A better rendering, also suggested by Wilson is : "who may animate or enlighten our intellects."

merits and demerits with kindness and justice ; nobody, howsoever great in his own field, even in the state of his final release and emancipation shares with our Lord the responsibilities or privileges of the supreme divine functions, which are supervised by God alone.

The Veda and the Vedanta Sutras acknowledge God as the source of knowledge. In the Vedanta Sutras, Brahman is regarded as the first cause of creation, its sustenance and dissolution (जन्माद्यस्य यतः, *janmadyasya yatah*), and He alone is the source of divine knowledge (शास्त्रयोनित्वात्, *sastrayonitvat*).

> From that Great Yajna or supreme Lord, *ṛcas* (the Ṛgveda), and *sama* (Samaveda) hymns were born. Therefrom the *chandas* (the Atharva Veda) were produced. The *yajus* (the Yajurveda) had its birth from it.[1] (Ṛv.X.90.9; Av. XIX. 6.13)

On the one hand, our Lord revealed the four Vedas for the welfare of the mankind, on the other hand, He gave to man the comprehension capacity of this vast knowledge. This potentiality rests in mind, a supreme gift to humanity :

> Wherein the *ṛcas*, *samans*, *yajur* verses, like spokes within a car's nave are included.
> And all the thought of creatures is inwoven, may that my mind, be moved by right intention.[2]
> (Yv. XXXIV. 5)

The Vedas were given to the man at the earliest stage of human history but carry a message for all times. They are the source book of all knowledge. The Vedas are meant for the lower and higher stages both, i.e. for the worldly or empirical and for the transcendental. For the lower

1. तस्माद्यज्ञात् सर्वहुतः ऋचः सामानि जज्ञिरे ।
छन्दांसि जज्ञिरे तस्माद् यजुस्तस्मादजायत ॥ (Ṛv. XI 90. 9; Av. XIX. 6. 13)
For the enumeration of the four Vedas, see also Chandogya Upanisad (VII. 1. 2).

2. यस्मिन्नृचः साम यजूꣳषि यस्मिन् प्रतिष्ठिता रथनाभाविवाराः ।
यस्मिंश्चित्तꣳ सर्वमोतं प्रजानां तन्मे मनः शिवसंकल्पमस्तु ॥ (Yv. XXXIV. 5)

stage, they enumerate the duty of the conduct of life, known as Dharma, and for the higher stage, the divine knowledge or the knowledge or Brahman. The first is known as *avidya*, *asambhuti* or *apara*, leading to (*abhyudaya* अभ्युदय) and the higher one is known as *vidya*, *sambhuti*, or *para* leading to (*nisreyasa*, निःश्रेयस).[1] It is necessary to have a complete co-ordination between the two : one who strives to attain the lower knowledge, whilst neglecting the higher one is in darkness, and one who feigns to show that he would be caring for the higher knowledge alone without the due regards to the lower one is groping still more in darkness.[2] (Yv. XL. 9-14)

Inspired by the Vedas, the ancient seers of the Vedic age developed their positive sciences and made the world worth while to live in with comforts and purposefulness; and again inspired by the same Vedic thoughts, they explored the realms of inner self and got an insight into some of the fundamental mysteries of the innermost realms of psychic and spiritual worlds and the superb knowledge of the Brahman and His realization.

One cannot study the Veda, without the proper study of the Vedangas, Upangas and Upavedas, which the *ṛsis* gave a systematic form. In an attempt to study the Veda and to know God, the ancient seers, by and by, developed their positive and mystic sciences, and presented them as the books on *systematics*, which later on were known as *sastras*, different from the *sruti*, which in her most fluid and plastic form became the basis of *sastra*. The people of the Vedic age developed their culture and civilization on the basis of the Vedic thoughts. They developed their agri-

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1. विद्यां चाविद्यां (Yv. XI. 14). सम्भूति, असम्भूति (विनाशं) (Yv. XL. 9. 11; परा-अपरा (Mundaka); यतोऽभ्युदयनिःश्रेयससिद्धिः स धर्मः (Vaisesika).

2. अन्धन्तमः प्रविशन्ति येऽविद्यामुपासते ।
तती भूय इव ते तमो यऽ उ विद्याया रताः ॥
अन्यदेवाहुर्विद्यायाऽअन्यदाहुरविद्यायाः ।
इति शुश्रुम धीराणां ये नस्तद्विचचक्षिरे ॥
विद्यां चाविद्यां च यस्तद्वेदोभय सह ।
अविद्यया मृत्युं तीर्त्वा विद्ययामृतमश्नुते ॥
and similar verses for *sambhuti* and *asambhuti* (Yv. XL. 9-14)

culture,[1] domesticated their cattle, discovered fire and its use and from cow's milk produced a host of milk products.[2]

Inspired from the Vedic verses, the ancient seers developed their basic principles of astronomy. The word '*go*', which so frequently occurs in the Vedic hymns, has been interpreted as cow, speech, the rays of the sun, the sun itself, clouds, water etc. In an interesting pamphlet, Gavam Ayana (1908), R. Shamsastry says, that *go* is nothing else than a name applied to the intercalary day, which being the product of four quarter days of four consecutive solar years is to be added to every fourth year making it consist of 366 days. Kutsa Angiras was the first *ṛsi* who recognized this intercalary year (as infant), on the basis of the verse, Ṛv. I.96.5. Shamsastry ascribes its credit to Manu :

> The night and day, mutually effacing each other's complexion give nourishment combined together to one infant.[3] (Ṛv. I.96.5)

Gavam Ayana (गवां-अयन) ceremony is vividly described in the Taittiriya Samhita (Kṛsna Yajurveda), Seventh Book, Chapter V, and the Baudhayana Srauta Srauta. In the

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1. For plough, furrow, oxen etc. see Ṛv. IV. 57. 3-4; X. 34. 13; Yv. XII. 67-71. For further details, see SBr. VII. 2. 2. For the list of cereals, see Yv. XVIII. 12 (rice, millet, beans, wheat, sesamum, barley, vetches and lentils—व्रीह्यश्च मे यवाश्च मे).

   For digging implements like *abhri*, spade. see Yv. XI. 10. 11; Av. X. 4. 14; for a digger *Khanitṛ*, see Rv. X. 97. 30. Av. IV. 6. 8.
2. Amongst milk products of the Vedic age, we have *prati-duh* (fresh milk, still warm), *sṛta* (boiled milk), *sara* (cream), *dadhi* (sour curd), *mastu* (sour cream), *atancana* (curdled milk, i. e. butter milk and fresh milk), *navanita* (butter), *ghṛta* (clarified butter), *Amiksa* (clotted curds) and *vajina* (whey). SBr. III. 3. 3. 2. Yv. XXXIX. 4. 53; Av. IX. 4. 4; Rv. I. 5. 5); also *dadhyasira* (Rv. I. 137. 2) [प्रतिदुह्, शृत, सर, दधि, मस्तु, आतञ्चन, नवनीत, घृत, आमिक्षा, वाजिन and दध्याशिर].
3. नक्तोषासा वर्णमामेम्याने धापयेते शिशुमेकं समीची।
   द्यावाक्षामा रुक्मो अन्तर्विभाति देवा अग्निं धारयन् द्रविणोदाम् । (Ṛv. I. 96. 5)

Asya Vamiya Sukta of the Ṛgveda, we have several verses, which obviously refer to the astronomical observations, particularly concerning earth going round the sun.

> The one sole (sun) having three mothers and three fathers, stood on high...The twelve-spoked wheel of the true (sun) revolves round the heavens and never tends to decay; seven hundred and twenty children in pairs, Agni, abide in it[1]. (Rv. I. 164. 10-11)

The Vedic seers kept apart 21 days in each cycle of four years restricting the number of days in the year to 360.

The three quarter days of three consecutive solar years in each cycle of four years are also termed as three foot-steps of Visnu.

The first year after the fourth year of any cycle would commence in the evening and close at midnight after the lapse of 365¼ days; the second year would commence at midnight and close in the morning of 366th day; the third year would begin in the morning and end at the midday of the 366th day; and the fourth year, beginning at the midday would come to a close on the usual evening of the 366th day. The first is called Kali or Ekata, the second year Dvapara or Dvita; the third year Treta or Trita, and the fourth year Kṛta (complete); Satya, Ṛta, truth, i.e. that which has come into existence. The Vedic Yuga thus consists of four or five years.[2] The following lines of the Aitareya Brahmana should be read on these lines :

> The year Kali is lying down; Dvapara is leaving the bed; standing erect is Treta and Kṛta happens to walk here and there.[3]

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1. तिस्रो मातृस्त्रीन् पितृन् बिभ्रदेक ऊर्ध्वस्तस्थौ नेमव ग्लापयन्ति ।
मन्त्रयन्ते दिवो अमुष्य पृष्ठे विश्वविदं वाचमविश्वमिन्वाम् ॥
द्वादशारं न हि तज्जराय वर्वर्ति चक्रं परि द्यामृतस्य ।
आ पुत्रा अग्ने मिथुनासो अत्र सप्त शतानि विंशतिश्च तस्थुः ॥(Ṛv. I. 164. 10-11)
2. दीर्घतमा माम ते यो जुजुर्वान दशमे युगे । (Ṛv. I. 158. 6)
3. कलिः शयानो भवति संजिहानस्तु द्वापरः । उत्तिष्ठन् त्रेता
भवति कृतं संपद्यते चरंश्चरंवेति चरंवेति । (Ait. Br. VII. 15)

The Vedic era, *gavam ayana,* according to Shamasastry was in use in India from 3101 B.C. to 1260 B.C. The astronomical terminology considerably changed since then.

In the Atharva Veda, we have an enumeration of the Vedic constellations (Av. XIX. 7.1-5) : Kṛttikas, Rohini, Mṛgasiras, Ardra, two Punarvasus, Pusya, Aslesa, Magha, Purva-phalguni, Hasta, Citra, Swati, two Visakhas, Anu-radha, Jyestha, Mula, Purva-Asadha, Uttara-Asadha, Abhijit, Sravana, Sravistha, Satabhisak, Prosthapada, Revati, two Asvayujas, and Bharani. (Av.XIX.7.1-5). The seer Gargya is the *ṛsi* of this hymn, and he for the first time recognized these constellations.[1]

Dayananda has quoted a number of verses from the Vedas in the support of the rotations and revolutions of the earth[2] (a concept later on worked out by Aryabhata I, in his Aryabhatiya) (Ṛv.X.65.6) or moon going round the Earth[3] (Ṛv.VIII.48.13). The planets revolving round the sun are under the directive attraction forces of the sun.[4] Of course, whilst giving out these truths, the Vedas have their own characteristic cryptic style of expressions

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1. कृत्तिका, रोहिणी, मृगशिरस्, आर्द्रा, पुनर्वसू, पुष्य, आश्लेषा, मघा, पूर्वा फाल्गुनी, हस्त, चित्रा, स्वाति, विशाखे, अनुराधा, ज्येष्ठा, मूल, पूर्वा अषाढा, उत्तरा अषाढा, अभिजित्, श्रवण, श्रविष्ठा, शतभिषक्, प्रोष्ठपदा, रेवती अश्वयुजौ, भरणी । **(Av. XIX. 7. 1-5) These *nakshatras* or mansions of the moon, the asterisms in the moon's path, were twenty-seven in number according to the earlier reckoning and twenty-eight in later astronomy. Their names and order are somewhat differently given in the Taittiriya Brahmana and the Taittiriya Samhita.**
2. या गोर्वर्तनि पर्येति निष्कृतं पयो दुहाना व्रतनीरवारतः । **(Ṛv. X. 65. 6)**
   आयं गौः पृश्निरक्रमीदसदन् मातरं पुरः । पितरं च प्रयन्त्स्वः । **(Yv. III.6)**
3. त्वं सोम पितृभिः संविदानोऽनु द्यावापृथिवी आ ततन्थ । **(Ṛv. VIII. 45. 13)**
4. यदा ते हर्यता हरी वावृधाते दिवे दिवे । आदित् ते विश्वा भुवनानि येमिरे ।
   (Ṛv. VIII. 12. 28)

   आकृष्णेन रजसा वर्तमानो निवेशयन्नमृतं मर्त्यं च । हिरण्ययेन
   सविता रथेना देवो याति भुवनानि पश्यन् ॥ **(Yv. XXXIII. 43)**
   यदा सूर्यममुं दिवि शुक्रं ज्योतिरधारयः ।
   आदित् ये विश्वा भुवनानि येमिरे ॥ **(Ṛv. VIII. 10. 30)**
   व्यस्तभ्नाद् रोदसी मित्रो अद्भुतोऽन्तर्वावदकृणोज्ज्योतिषा तमः ।
   वि चर्मणीव धिषणे अवर्तयद् वैश्वानरो विश्वमधत्त वृष्ण्यम् ॥ **(Ṛv. VI. 8. 3)**

capable of being interpreted on the cosmic, ephimeral and spiritual planes.

Astronomy depends on mathematics, pure and applied. The Vedas inspired people to develop this science. Mathematics is an aid to calculations, and calculations depend on numerals, starting from *kham* (Zero), and ending into *brahma* (larger than the largest, i. e. infinity). Another name for infinite is *aditi*. Max Müller in his Vedic Hymns, Part I, p. 241, says that Aditi is "in reality the earliest name invented to express the Infinite, not the Infinite as the result of a long process of abstract reasoning, but the visible *infinite*, visible, as it were, to the naked eye, the endless expanse beyond the earth, beyond the clouds, beyond the sky. That was called Aditi, the unbound, the unbounded; one might almost say, but fear of misunderstandings, the Absolute, for it is derived from *diti*, bond, and the negative particle, and meant therefore originally what is free from bonds of any kind, whether of space or time, free from physical weakness, free from moral guilt. And thus, besides the mathematical Infinity, God Himself is the Infinite Unity. Zero or *kham* is the reciprocal of Infinity, an infinitesimality, and the soul, the lower self is also of infinitesimal dimensions.

The Yajurveda Samhita in one context describes the numerals, and Medhatithi is the *ṛsi* of this verse. (Yv.XVII.2)

> O Agni, may these bricks (*istakas*) be mine own milch kine: one; ten; ten-ten a hundred; ten hundred a thousand; ten thousands an *ayuta;* ten *ayutas* a *niyuta;* ten *niyutas* a *prayuta;* ten *prayutas* an *arbuda;* ten *arbudas* a *nyarbuda;* ten *nyarbudas* a *samudra;* ten *samudras* a *madhya;* ten *madhyas* an *anta;* ten *antas* a *parardha*. May these bricks be mine own *dhenus* (milch-kine) in yonder world and in this world.[1] (Yv. XVII.2)

1. इमा मेऽ अग्न इष्टका धेनवः सन्त्वेका च दश च दश च
शतं च शतं सहस्रं च सहस्रं चायुतं चायुतं च
नियुतं च नियुतं च प्रयुतं चार्बुदं च न्यर्बुदं च
समुद्रश्च मध्यं चान्तश्च परार्धश्चैता मेऽ अग्नऽ इष्टका
धेनवः सन्त्वमुष्मिंल्लोके । (Yv. XVII. 2)

The numeral *parardha*, on the basis of the successive multiples of tens is equal to 10^{12} (*parardha* is equal to an English billion or million-million). A parallel of this enumeration in world's literalure would not be easily found. The Vedic texts are very much fond of expressing great idea in terms of numerals (very often, mystically cryptic). In the Ṛgveda (II.18.4-6) we have numerals arranged in a definite order 2,4,6,8,20,30,40,50,60,70,80,90,100. We have in a certain context an enumeration of the series 4,5, 6,7,...19,20 in the Atharvaveda (XIX.23,1-17). The numerals from 1 to 17 are given in respect of mantras and stanzas in the Yajurveda (IX.31-34). The odd numerals, 1,3, 5...,33 are mentioned in Yv.XIV.28-31 and XVIII.24. The multiples of four are given in Yv.XVIII.24. The very first verse of the Atharvaveda refers to all types of combination from three and seven (*trisaptah*) or triple-seven (i. e. $3+7=10; 3\times7=21, 3+5+7$ (odds from three to seven and their sum$=15$.

$$\text{Triple seven}=(3+7)[(3\times7)+(3+5+7)]=10(21+15)$$
$$=360$$

The term 360 is so important in a cycle of 360 degree, or a year of 360 days.

The names of the Vedic numerals have been etymologically explained by Yaska in Niruka[1]. (III. 10)

Basis of Geometry

The Vedic texts refer to three terms, *ahavaniya* (बाहवनीय), *garhapatya* (गार्हपत्य), and *daksina* (दक्षिण), which, when fire-rituals became current in the society, were used for three types of fire-altars.[2] In the Yajnika (eccle-

1. एका इता संख्या । द्वौ द्रुवतरा संख्या । त्रयस्तीर्णतमा संख्या । चत्वारश्चलिततमा संख्या । अष्टौ अश्नोतेः । नव च वननीया, न अवाप्ता वा । (Nir. III. 10)
2. सोदक्रामत् सा गार्हपत्ये न्यक्रामत् (2) सोदक्रामत् साहवनीये न्यक्रामत् (4) सोदक्रामत् सा दक्षिणाग्नौ न्यक्रामत् (6) । (Av. VIII. 10. 2, 4, 6) गार्हपत्येन सन्त्य ऋतुना यज्ञनीरसि । (Ṛv. I. 15. 12) अस्मिन् गृहे गार्हपत्याय जागृहि । (Ṛv. X. 85. 2)

siastical) period, elaborate details were worked out for these fire-altars. The *ahavaniya* (eastern fire) was the altar square in form. The *garhapatya* (domestic fire) was circular and the *daksinagni* (southern fire) was assigned the semi-circular form. As the time passed on, a few postulates were advanced, e. g. (i) the surface area (A) of the altar should have a relation with the height (p) of the sacrificer (the *yajamana*), standing erect with arms stretched straight over the head; this unit of measurement was known to be a *purusa*; i. e. A=c.p. where c is a constant (a multiple or submultiple of the height of the *yajamana*); (ii) it is to the option of the sacrificer to construct the fire altar with square surface, or circular, but the area (A) in both the options should remain the same. It is easier to construct a square with the area *A*, but it becomes a geometric problem to construct a circle having the area *A*. In this context, the old Vedic geometers worked out a relation between the sides of a square (also of a rectangle) and its diagonal (Baudhayana Theorem), relation between the diameter of a circle and its circumference (value of π—pi) and area of a circle and its diameter. The authors of the Sutras have given the details of the constructions of the fire altars (the Manava Sulba Sutra, the Baudhayana Sulba Sutra, the Apastamba Sulba Sutra and the Katyayana Sulba Sutra). The units of various types of measurements laid the foundation of metrology in the Vedic age. The inspirations for metrology and geometry were drawn from several Vedic verses.[1]

Mechanical and Engineering Devices

The Vedic verses inspired the earliest human society for mechanical devices. The primitive mechanical devices must have been very simple, but by and by, these devices evolved

1. सहस्रस्य प्रमासि सहस्रस्य प्रतिमासि सहस्रस्योन्मासि
साहस्रोऽसि सहस्राय त्वा । (Yv. XV. 65)
शं न सोमो भवतु शं नः शं नो ग्रावाणः शमु सन्तु यज्ञाः ।
शं न स्वरूणां मितयो भवन्तु शं नः प्रस्वः शम्वस्तु वेदिः । (Ṛv. VII. 35. 7)
कासीत् प्रमा प्रतिमा किं निदानमाज्यं किमासीत् परिधिः क आसीत् ।
छन्दः किमासीत् प्र उगं किमुक्थं यद्देवा देवमयजन्त विश्वे ॥ (Ṛv. X. 130. 3)

out to huge dimensions to serve technology in human history. Man differs from ape in the fact that he not only depends on his *manual* labour, he has invented machines in the *history* of his civilization and culture. The Vedas fairly and extensively refer to this mechanization. The Ṛgveda refers to a simple churning device for the generation of fire by the process of attrition, the *adhimantha* (अधिमन्थ),[1] and inspired by this verse, Visvamitra was the first man in human history to have introduced this mechanism for the quick generation of fire. The whole clan of Angirasas specialized in this art of churning fire through wood sticks. Of course, Atharvan was the first person who made the discovery of fire at the dawn of the human civilization, and therefore, he becomes the *ṛsi* of most of those verses which are associated with the introduction of fire. Mayobhuh and Gṛtsamada also took interest in the advancement of the fire-culture. (Yv.XI.21;22;28).

The introduction of fire-rituals provided a great impetus to the development of primitive mechanical devices. The bricks, known as *istakas* (Yv.XII.21; 31; XVII.2; XXXV.8) were first used for the construction of fire-altars, and later on they found their application in the construction of buildings. The Sulba Sutras give details of these bricks and their dimensions (the bricks were fire-burnt, not burnt, the perforated ones and so on). The receptacle for the sacred fire was known as Agni-dhana (अग्निधान) Ṛv.X.165.3; Av. VI.27.3;XII.3.35): ladles and cups were known as *sruk* (स्रुक) and *camas* (चमस्); reservoirs or vats were known as *dronakalasa* (द्रोण कलश), the pressing stones were known as *gravana* (ग्रावाण), pressing boards were *adhisavana* (अधिषवण); and besides these we have[2],

Idhma (kindling wood) — इध्म
Barhi (strew) — बर्हि
Dhṛsti or upavesa (shovelling stick) — धृष्टि, उपवेश
Sva-rava, Upa-rava (sounding holes) — स्वरव, उपरव
Havirdhana (oblation holder) — हविर्धान

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1. अस्तीदमधिमन्थनमस्ति प्रजननं कृतम् । (Ṛv. III. 29. 1)
2. Yv. XVIII. 20-21; XX. 27; Av. II. 31. 1; XII. 3. 19. IX. 6 (1). 12-17; X. 9. 26.

Parisasa (lifting sticks) — परीशस
Vayavya (cups and bowls) — वायव्य
Sata (basket) — सत
Kumbhi (jar) — कुम्भी
Sthali (cooking pot) — स्थाली
Dṛsad (milk stone) — दृषद्
Ulukhala, khalva (grinding slate) — उलूखल, खल्व
Musala (pestle) — मुशल
Surpa (winnowing basket) — शूर्प
Titau (sieve) — तितउ
Tarhana (bruiser) — तर्हण
Carma or Kṛsnajina (skin or antelope's skin) — चर्म, कृष्णाजिन
Putabhṛta (receiver of filtrate) — पूतभृत
Pavitra (strainer) — पवित्रा
Pinvan (milking bowl) — पिन्वन

The society was inspired for the numerous mechanical devices too; as *anas* (अनस्) cart (Ṛv. III.33.9); *abhri* (अभ्रि) spade (Yv. XI. 10); *asi* (असि) knife or razor (Ṛv. X. 86.18); *asandi* (आसन्दी) chair or throne (Yv. XIX. 16); *itsuna* (इट्सून) mat; *isu* (इषु) arrow; *ukha* (उखा) cauldron (Yv. XI. 61); *kalasa* (कलश), vat or beaker (Yv. VII. 42; Av. IX. 1.6); *kasipu* (कशिपु), or cushion of reeds (Av. VI. 138.5); *kasipu up-barhana* (कशिपु उपबर्हण), or pillow-covering (Av. IX. 6.10); *Uparisayana* (उपरिशयन), or coverlet[1] (Av. IX. 6.9); *ksura* (क्षुर), razor (Av. VI. 68.1; Ṛv. I. 166.10.) *khanitra* (खनित्र) digging implement (Ṛv. I. 179.6); *graha* (ग्रह) cups and ladles (Yv. XVII. 19-20); *jaya* (ज्या) arrow-string (Av. III. 19.8); *tantra* (तंत्र) loom or warp (Ṛv. X. 71.9); *tantu* (तन्तु) thread (Ṛv. X. 134.5); *tantu-metam* (तन्तुमेतम्) or outspun thread (Yv.XV. 53); *mayukha* (मयूख), peg or pin for weaving *tasara* (तसर) or *trasara* (त्रसर), shuttle for weaving[2] (Ṛv. X. 130.2); *Dama* (दाम),

1. The whole hymn Av. IX.6 is devoted to the entertainment of a guest, and mentions the details of furnishing a guest room.
2. The whole sukta refers to the cosmic weaving, and indirectly refers to the weaving art of cloth.
   यो यज्ञो विश्वतस्तन्तुभिस्तत एकशतं देवकर्मभिरायतः ।
   इमे वयन्ति पितरो य आययुः प्र वयाप वयेत्यासते तते ॥ (Contd.)

string or thread (V. 36.1; I. 162.8) also *rajju* (रज्जु) (or rope), *rasana* (रशना) rein or bridle, *Samdana* (संदान), bond or halter for horses or coursers.[1] (Ṛv. I. 162.8)

Carts, Ships and Aeroplanes

The Vedic verses have metaphorical and non-metaphorical references to roadways, waterways and air-ways. The architects who specialize in these three lines were known. The road-carts drawn by horses are devised and constructed by *vajins* (वाजिन्) : *vajins*, you are borne by stout horses or coursers[2] mounted on a brilliant car.[3] *Vaja* is related to the Visvedevah (all-gods), *ṛbhu* (ऋभु), or *ṛbhuksin* (ऋभुक्षिन्), to Indra (dealing with space-crafts) and *vibhu* (विभु), or *vibhvan* (विभ्वन) to Varuna (dealing with waterships).[4] (Ṛv. IV. 33.9) *Ṛbhus* are said to construct the firm-abiding, wheel conducting car[5] (Ṛv. IV. 33.8). The car made by them traverses the firmament without horses, without reins (Ṛv. IV. 36.1).[6] This description may be merely metaphorical and be referring to stars, or suns or heavenly bodies moving with tremendous speed in space.

The water-ships are known as *nava* (नाव). We have :

पुमां एनं तनुत उत्कृणत्ति पुमान् वितत्ने अधि नाके अस्मिन् ।
इमे मयूखा उपसेदुरू सदः सामानि चक्रुस्तसराण्योतवे ॥

The sacrifice which is extended on every side by the threads spread out by the worship of the gods for hundred and one years, these our progenitors, who have preceded us, weave it, weaving forwards, weaving backwards, they worship when the world is woven. (1).

The first man spreads out this (web), the first man rolls it up : he spreads it above in this heaven; these his rays have sat down on the seat (of sacrifice); they have made prayers serve as shuttles for weaving. (2).

1. यद् वाजिनो दाम संदानमर्वतो या शीर्ष्ण्या रशना रज्जुरस्य । (Ṛv. VI. 162. 8)
2. पीवो अश्वः शुचद् रथा हि भूताऽयः शिप्रा वाजिनः सुनिष्काः । (Ṛv. IV. 37.4)
3. तद् वो वाजा ऋभवः सुप्रवचनं देवेषु विभ्वो अभवन्महित्वम् । (Ṛv. IV. 36. 3)
4. वाजो देवानामभवत् सुकर्मेन्द्रस्य ऋभुक्षा वरुणस्य विभ्वा । (Ṛv. IV 33. 9)
   (*Vaja* of All- gods, *ṛbhu* of Indra, *vibhu* of Varuna.)
5. रथं ये चक्रुः सुवृतं नरेष्ठां ये धेनुं विश्वजुवं विश्वरूपाम् ।
   त आ तक्षन्त्वृभवो रयिं नः स्ववसः स्वपसः सुहस्ताः ॥ (Ṛv. IV.33.8)
6. अनश्वो जातो अनभीशुरुक्थ्यो रथस्त्रिचक्रः परिवर्तते रजः । (Ṛv. IV. 36.1)

> Come as on ship, to bear us over an ocean of praises; harness, Asvins, your car.[1] (I. 46.7)

Another metaphorical description of a ship is on these lines :

> Three nights and three days, Nasatyas, have you conveyed Bhujyu, in three rapid, revolving cars, having one hundred wheels and drawn by six horses, along the dry bed of the ocean to the shore of sea.[2] (Ṛv. I. 116.4).

The Vedas are thus not only the religious scriptures in the usual narrow sense; they deal with a subject matter which covers the problems of our life in totality, and this literature has been inspiring our history from remote times, and shall continue to promote our culture and civilization in all the years to come.

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1. आ नो नावा मतीनां यातं पाराय गन्तवे ।
   युञ्जाथामश्विना रथम् ॥ (Ṛv. I. 46.7)
2. तिस्रः क्षपस्त्रिरहाति व्रजद्भिर्नासत्या भुज्युमूहथुः पतङ्गैः ।
   समुद्रस्य धन्वन्नार्द्रस्य पारे त्रिभी रथैः शतपद्भिः षडश्वैः ॥ (Ṛv. I. 116.4).

2

THE SAMHITAS

The Veda Pratisthana Trust of New Delhi, set up in memory of the late Padma Bhushan Col. Ved Rattan Mohan, has undertaken the venture of presenting a readable translation of all the four Vedas, the Ṛgveda, the Yajur-veda, the Samaveda and the Atharvaveda. The Ṛgveda consists of metrical hymns called *suktas*, associated with the traditionally assigned *devatas*, and the *ṛsis*. In one and the same hymn, there may be different *devatas* and different *ṛsis* for different verses (*mantra*). We are indebted to the authors of the Anukramanikas or the Indexes, who have traditionally preserved a list of the *devatas* and *ṛsis* of these hymns or stanzas. The Anukramanikas are available for all the four Vedas. There are in the Veda itself, no directions as regards to the use and application of the verses (mantras), or of the part of the stanzas; a direction as to this respect is called the *viniyoga* (विनियोग) which indicates the occasions on which these verses are to be recited. These *viniyogas*, whilst they indicate a reverential attitude of the priests towards the divine texts, occasionally have done more harm than any good in representing and preserving the true spirit of the Vedic verses. The Yajur-veda has been traditionally much more used for ritualistical or liturgical purposes than any other Veda. The Samaveda verses are traditionally chanted on different ceremonial occasions. In its massive character, the Atharvaveda comes next to the Ṛgveda. In a formal sacrifice, *hotṛ* (होतृ) priest recites the Ṛk verses, *Adhvaryu* (अध्वर्यु) the Yajus formulae, *udgata* (उद्गाता) chants the Samans, *brahma* (ब्रह्मा) supervises the entire ceremony.

Ṛgveda Samhita,—In the Ṛgveda, the number of hymns (सूक्त) is 1,028, containing in all 10,589 verses : they have

been arranged in two sorts of classifications; one divides them amongst eight *khandas* (portions, खंड) or more popularly called *astakas* (eighths, अष्टक); each of which is again divided into eight *adhyayas* (lectures, अध्याय). The other plan classes the hymns under ten *mandalas*, (books or circles, मण्डल) subdivided into 85 *anuvakas* (sub-sections अनुवाक). There is a further subdivision of hymns into *vargas* (total 2424) or paragraphs of about five stanzas each, and this subdivision into *vargas* (वर्ग) is common to both classifications. The hymns are of various extent : in one instance the hymn consists of a single verse (e.g.I.99); hymn 164 of the first book has, on the other hand, as many as 52 verses; hymn 16 of the sixth book has 48 verses; and so are VIII. 6 (48 verses); IX.97 (58 verses); and X.85 (47 vereses).

There has been a difference of opinion in respect to the total number of verses in the Rgveda. We are told that there were in all 21 Samhitas (संहिता) or redactions of the Rg verses according to different schools or *sakhas* (branches), but with the exception of the present one, none else is now available; and in the case of the present one also, no two authorities seem to agree with each other as to the total number :

Authority	Total Number of verses
Anuvakanukramani of Saunaka	10,580+one quarter
Chanda-Samkhya Parisista	10,402
Rk-sarvanukramani, Tr. Jagannatha	10,552
Caranavyuha, Tr. Mahidasa	10,552 (with Balakhilya)
do	10,472 (without Balakhilya)
Venkatamadhava	10,402
do	10,480 (according to dvipada)
Dayananda	10,589 and 10,521
Macdonald	10,442
do	10,569 (according to dvipada)
Satyavrata Samasrami	10,522

We are also told (Satapatha Brahmana X.4.2.23) that the total number of letters in the Vedas amount to the number of syallables in 12,000 *bṛhati* metres (i.e.12,000 x 36=432,000); probably this is the total number of letters in entire verses (not prose) of the four Vedas. In the Ṛgveda, there are several such verses which may be reckoned as either consisting of two lines each (dvipada, द्विपदा) or as four lines each (*catuspada,* चतुष्पदा). In all, in the Ṛgveda, there are 157 dvipadas, of which 17 are really dvipadas, the rest 140 may sometimes be reckoned as *dvipadas* and sometimes as *catuspadas.* This explains for a difference of 70 whilst giving the total number of the verses. Of course, it is the way of reckoning that explains the difference. It has been one of the wonders of human ingenuity, that the Vedic verses could be preserved through all these ages (thousands of years) with all necessary accents and syllables, not one missing, all in its right place with its full significance, not through the written manuscripts, but through the oral chants, traditionally handed over to posterity through generations.

Yajurveda Samhita-The Yajurveda has in all 1975 verses spread over forty chapters known as *adhyaya* (अध्याय). The biggest chapter is twelfth with 117 verses, and then the following : XVII (99); XXXIV (98); XXXIII (97); XIX (95); XX (90); XI (83); the shortest chapter is XXXIX with 13 verses followed by XXXII (16), and XL (17). Some of the verses of the Yajurveda give the *pratikas* (first words, प्रतीक) of some other verses occurring elsewhere (perhaps these verses were to be repeated in certain rituals). For example :

1. न तस्य प्रतिमा अस्ति यस्य नाम महद्यशः ।
   हिरण्यगर्भ इत्येष, मा मा हि॑ सीदित्येषा यस्मान्न जात इत्येषः ॥

(Yv. XXXII. 3)

Here the indication is that the verses beginning with *pratikas* हिरण्यगर्भं॰ (XXV. 10-13); मा मा हि॑सीद्॰ (XII.102) and यस्मान्न जातः॰ (VIII. 36-37) are to be repeated.

2. यं क्रन्दसीऽ अवसा तस्तभानेऽ अभ्यैक्षेतां मनसा रेजमाने ।
यत्राधि सूरऽउदितो विभाति कस्मै देवाय हविषा विधेम ॥
आपो ह यद् बृहतीर्यश्चिदापः । (Yv. XXXII. 7)

Here the verses to be repeated are the ones beginning with the *pratikas* आपो ह यद् बृहती० (XXVII.25) and यश्चिदापः० (XXVII. 26).

Similarly, we have the *pratikas* appended to the verses XXXIII. 21 (*pratikas* from VII.12 and 16); XXXIII.27. (*pratikas* appended VII.40 and VIII. 2-3); XXXIII. 33 (*Pratikas* appended VII. 12, 16 and 42); XXXIII. 47 (*pratikas* appended VII.12, 16, 19, 33 and XXXII. 10,34). These appended *pratikas* abound in chapters XXXII to XXXIV.

The Yajurveda Samhita is also known as the Vajasaneyi-Madhyandina Sukla Yajurveda or the white Yajurveda, since we have another text also available which is known as the Kṛsna Yajurveda (the Black Yajurveda) or the Taittiriya Samhita which in characteristics is more allied to a *brahmana* rather to a *sruti*. We have several recensions of both of them[1] and thus these Samhitas indicate the wide popularity of the Yajurveda in the country with a variety of textual differences and their usages in rituals.

Samaveda Samhita—The Samaveda or the Veda of Holy Songs ranks third in the usual order of enumeration of the Vedas, but in sanctity and liturgical importance it is next to the Ṛgveda. This Samhita consists chiefly of hymns to be chanted by the *udgatṛ* priests at the performance of those important sacrifices in which the juice of the Soma plant, clarified and mixed with milk and other ingredients was offered as libation on ceremonial occasions, and the Sama verses were recited even as such as devotional songs.

Ordinarily, the Samaveda appears to be a collection

1. **There are two popular recensions of the White Yajurveda: the Madhyandin a (माध्यन्दिन) and the Kanva '(काण्व) ; and three of the Black Yajurveda : Kathaka (काठक) ; Kapisthala-Kath (कपिष्ठल-कठ) and Maitrayani (मैत्रायणी).**

made up of hymns, portions of hymns, and detached verses, taken mainly from the Rgveda, transposed and rearranged without reference to their original order to suit the religious ceremonies in which they were to be employed. The Samaveda contains in all 1,875 verses, of which only 75 are not to be found in the Ṛgveda, whilst 1,800 are virtually the repetitions of the Ṛgvedic verses.

The verses of the Samaveda have been classified in a number of ways:

(a) According to one system, the whole text has been classified into two parts (*arcikas*), the Purvarcika (पूर्वार्चिक) and the Uttararcika (उत्तरार्चिक). The Purvarcika or Part I is divided into six *prapathakas* (प्रपाठक) or Books; then each *prapathaka* has been subdivided into two *adhyayas* (अध्याय) or chapters. Then each chapter or the *adhyaya* has been further subdivided into five *dasatis* (दशति) or decades of about ten verses each;—the last chapter (i.e. VI.2) has, however, only four *dasatis*. Thus, in Purvarcika, we have in all 6 *prapathakas*, ten *adhyayas*, 59 *dasatis*, and in all 585 verses.

In the Uttararcika or Part II, we have in all 9 books or *prapathakas*. The *prapathakas* I to V have 2 chapters or 2 *adhyayas* each, i. e. in all 10 chapters; the *prapathakas* VI to IX have, however, 3 chapters in each, totalling thus 12. In this way, the Uttararcika has in all 22 chapters. The number of *dasatis* in each chapter, and the verses are tabulated below :

Prapathaka (Books)	*Adhyaya* (Chapter)	*Tric* (Triads)	*Mantras* (Verses)
I	i	23	59 (62 ?)
	ii	22	62
II	i	19	55
	ii	19	56
III	i	22	69
	ii	23	76
IV	i	24	83
	ii	14	59
V	i	20	78 (80 ?)
	ii	23	94

VI	i	11	32
	ii	20	56
	iii	18	54
VII	i	16	46
	ii	14	38
	iii	21	44
VIII	i	14	40
	ii	19	52 (54 ?)
	iii	18	54
IX	i	18	51
	ii	13	33
	iii	9	27
9	22	400	1,218 (1225 ?)

The Uttararcika mostly consists of triads (tric, त्रिच्), a hymn of 3 verses. Griffith in his translation of the Samaveda thus deals in all 585+1218=1803 verses. Other authorities have included in this list an Aranyaka Kanda of 55 mantras and the Mahanamnyarcika of 10 verses and more verses mid-between, and thus the total becomes 1875.

Purvarcika (पूर्वार्चिक) Serial No.	1-585	:	585 verses
Aranyaka Kanda (आरण्यक काण्ड)	586-640	:	55
Mahanamnyarcika (महानाम्न्यार्चिक)	641-650	:	10
Uttararcika (उत्तरार्चिक)	651-1875	:	1225
	Total	:	1875

The Samaveda consists of the hymns of devotion. The following remarks of Griffith in connection with the Samaveda may be of some interest : "The collection is made up of hymns, portions of hymns, and detached verses, taken mainly from the Ṛgveda, transposed and rearranged, without reference to their original order, to suit the religious ceremonies in which they were to be employed. In these compiled hymns there are frequent variations of more or less importance, from the text of the Ṛgveda as we now possess it, which variations, although in some cases they are apparently explanatory, seem in others to be older and more original than the readings of the Ṛgveda. In

singing, the verses are still further altered by prolongation, repetition and insertion of syllables, and various modulations, rests, and other modifications prescribed, for the guidance of the officiating priests, in the *ganas* (गान) or song-books. Two of these manuals, the *grama-geya-gana*, or congregational, and the *aranya-gana* or forest-song book, follow the order of the verses of Part I, of the Samhita and two others, the *uhagana* (ऊहगान) and the *uhyagana* (ऊह्यगान) of Part II. This part is less disjointed than Part I, and is generally arranged in triplets, whose first is often the repetition of a verse that has occurred in Part I.

Atharvaveda Samhita-The Atharvaveda is a collection of 5977 verses spread over twenty books :

Book	Verses	Book	Verses	Book	Verses	Book	Verses
I	153	VI	454	XI	313	XVI	103
II	207	VII	286	XII	304	XVII	30
III	230	VIII	293	XIII	188	XVIII	283
IV	324	IX	313	XIV	139	XIX	453
V	376	X	350	XV	220	XX	958
						Total	5977

The books are further divided into hymns and the hymns into *ṛcs* or verses. In some of the classifications, the division is into *prapathaka* (प्रपाठक) or 'Vor-lesungen' or 'lectures' (*Whitney*), *anu-vakas* (अनुवाक) or recitations, *suktas* (सूक्त) or hymns and *ṛcs* (ऋच्) or verses. The verses of the long hymns are also grouped into 'verse-decades' corresponding to the *vargas* (वर्ग) of the Ṛgveda. Besides these divisions, there are recognized also the divisions called *artha-suktas* (अर्थ सूक्त) or 'sense-hymns' and *paryaya-suktas* (पर्याय सूक्त) or 'period-hymns', and the subdivisions of the latter are called *paryayas* (पर्याय). In the Paryaya-hymns, the division into *ganas* (गण) or some times *dandakas*, (दण्डक) is recognized, and the verses are distinguished as *avasana ṛcs* (अवसान ऋच्) and *ganavasana ṛcs* (गणावसान ऋच्). We shall for convenience express our references in terms of *kandas*, *suktas* and *ṛcs* only.

A closer study of text reveals the fact that the first

eighteen books fall into three grand divisions: (i) books I to VII contain the short hymns of miscellaneous subjects; (ii) books VIII to XII contain the long hymns of miscellaneous subjects; and (iii) books XIII to XVIII are characterized each by unity of subject.

We have said that some of the authorities prefer to divide the text of the Atharvaveda into *prapathakas* (lessons or lectures). There are thirty-four *prapathakas*, and they are numbered consecutively for the whole text so far as they go, that is, from book I to book XVIII. The *prapathaka*-division is not extended to books XIX and XX.

In the Atharvaveda, the *anuvakas*, literally, 'recitations' are sub-divisions of the individual book (*kanda*) and are numbered continuously through the book concerned. The number of *anuvakas* are as follows :

Kanda	Anuvakas	Kanda	Anuvakas	Kanda	Anuvakas	Kanda	Anuvakas
I	6	VI	13	XI	5	XVI	2
II	6	VII	10	XII	5	XVII	1
III	6	VIII	5	XIII	4	XVIIII	4
IV	8	IX	5	XIV	2		
V	6	X	5	XV	2		
						Total	95

We give below the summary of the Atharvan hymns and verses :

				Hymns	Verses
Grand Division	I	Books	I-VII	433	2030
Grand Division	II	Books	VIII-XII	45	1528
Grand Division	III	Books	XIII-XVIII	38	874
Total for three Grand Divisions				516	4432
The Supplement Book XIX				72	456
Total for Books I—XIX				588	4888
The Kuntapa-Khil of Book XX				10	130
Total for Books I—XIX and Khil				598	5018

The above figures are due to Whitney. According to another reckoning (Satavalekar), the figures are as follows :

Book	Hymns	Verses	Book	Hymns	Verses	Book	Hymns	Verses
I	35	153	VIII	10	293	XIII	4	188
II	36	207	IX	10	313	XIV	2	139
III	31	230	X	10	350	XV	18	220
IV	40	324	XI	10	313	XVI	9	103
V	31	376	XII	5	304	XVII	1	30
VI	142	454		45	1573	XVIII	4	283
VII	118 (123)	286					38	963
						XIX	72	453
Total	433 (438)	2030				XX	143	958
						Total	215	1411
						Grand Total	731	5977

OUR TEXT

We have taken all care to present to our reader a correct rendering of the Rgveda Samhita, and for this, we have accepted the text belonging to the Sakala Sakha (शाकल शाखा), named after a reputed teacher, Vedamitra or Sakalya (वेदमित्र or शाकल्य). In Prof. Max Müller's text, a few discrepancies have been noted by Satavalekar, for example, *syandra* (स्यन्द्रा) should invariably be read *spandra* (स्पन्द्रा) in the verses I.180.9; V.52.3;8;V.87.3;VI.12.5;X.42.5; and *mathna* (मथ्ना) in the verse I.181.5 should read as *mathra* (मथ्रा). In the whole of the Rgveda text, there is only one *Pathabheda* or the uncertainty of reading: *either*

ब्रध्नं मंश्चतोर्वरुणस्य बभ्रुं
or
ब्रध्नं मांश्चतोर्वरुणस्य बभ्रुं ।

(VII.44.3)

For our transliteration from *devanagari* to roman script for the Vedic Text, we have found it convenient to reproduce the entire text of Prof. Aufrecht, retaining his diacritical marks, which substantially differ from the present day standard ones. A list of his diacritical marks is as follows;

Vowels: अ (a); आ (ā); इ (i); ई (ī); उ (u); ऊ (ū); ऋ (ṛ) ऌ (lṛ); ए (e); ऐ (ai); ओ (o); औ (au); anusvara (ṇ); ं (ṅ)

Consonants:

क् (k); च् (c); ट् (ṭ); त् (t); प् (p);
ख् (kh); छ् (ch); ठ् (ṭh); थ् (th); फ् (ph);
ग् (g); ज् (j); ड् (ḍ); द् (d); ब् (b);
घ् (gh); झ् (jh); ढ् (ḍh); ध् (dh); भ् (bh);
ङ् (ṅ); ञ (ñ); ण् (ṇ); न् (n); म् (m);
य् (y); र् (r); ल् (l); व् (v);
श् (ṣ); स् (s); ष् (sh); ह् (h); Visarga : (ḥ).

Aufrecht in his transliteration has also given the *udatta* (उदात्त) accents by putting an apostrophe stroke (') on the vowel.

At the beginning of each hymn (*sukta*, सूक्त), we have given (i) the number of verses in the hymn, then the *ṛsi* of the hymn, followed by the *devata* (देवता) and the metre (*chanda*, छन्द). The subjects of *ṛsi* and metres have been dealt with in details in separate chapters.

For example, at the beginning of hymn I of Book I, we have in the *devanagari* script the legend :

नवर्चस्यास्य सूक्तस्य वैश्वामित्रो मधुच्छन्दा ऋषिः। अग्निर्देवता। गायत्री छन्दः॥

The legend indicates that the hymn has nine verses, and *ṛsi* or seer (the historical figure who for the first time gave the inner meaning of these verses, also known as *mantra-drasta*, मन्त्र-द्रष्टा) of this entire hymn is Madhucchanda of the family of Visvamitra. The *devata* of the entire hymn is *agni* (अग्नि), and the metre is *gayatri* (गायत्री).

Seers—There are hundreds of *ṛsis* or seers (the Vedic scholars of the earliest age, the inspired persons) associated with the Ṛgvedic verses; they are our historical persons who worked hard on the interpretations of these verses. We do not know the biodata of these great teachers; only that we know is that Katyayana's Sarvanukramani (सर्वानुक्रमणी), a traditional index has carefully kept a record of some of these details. Another record that we possess is Anuvakanukramani (अनुवाकानुक्रमणी) of Saunakacarya, and also the Bṛhaddevata (बृहद् देवता) of Saunaka.

So far as the *ṛsis* are concerned, we have a very incomplete record :

(i) In some cases, the name of the *ṛsi* is known, as well as the family name.

(ii) In some cases, the name of the *ṛsi* is not known, but only the family is known; or vice versa.

(iii) In some cases, the name and the family, both are not known. In such cases :

(a) The hypothetical names have been suggested, depending on some *special* word occurring in the text; the *ṛsi* in such cases is not necessarily a living human being.

(b) In the case of dialogues, the one who speaks, that is, the one in whose mouth the words have been put, is the *ṛsi*.

(iv) In a few cases, we have *ṛsikas* (the female seers) also, as the interpreters of the verses.

Metres.—There are seven popular metres with their detailed sub-classifications; these metres are : *gayatri* (24) *usnik* (28), *anustup* (32), *bṛhati* (36), *pankti* (40), *tristubh* (44), and *jagati* (48). The numerals in the parenthesis indicate the number of syllables in that metre normally.

The Pingala Vedanga (पिंगल वेदांग) has associated these seven metres with seven *svaras* (स्वर) or tones of music :

gayatri-षड्ज. usnik-ऋषभ. anustup-गान्धार.
bṛhati-मध्यम. pankti-पंचम. tristubh-धैवत.
and jagati-निषाद.

Devata—The Nirukta of Yaska has given a detailed description of the Vedic *devatas*, and this subject has also been discussed by the author of the Bṛhaddevata. In the Nirukta, the chapter VII to XII constitute the Daivata Kanda, whereas the first six chapters belong to the Naigama Kanda. In the words of the Nirukta, the section which enumerates appellations of deities, to whom panegyrics are primarily addressed is called *daivatam* (देवतम्). A particular verse or stanza is said to belong to a *devata* to whom a seer addresses his panegyrics with a particular desire and from whom he wishes to obtain his object. These verses are of three kinds: indirectly addressed, directly addressed and self-invocations.

Indirectly addressed: Nouns with verbs in the third person,e.g., Indra rules heaven, Indra the earth. (Ṛv. X. 89.10)

Directly addressed: Thou or a pronoun of the second person, e. g., O Indra, slay our enemies (Ṛv. X.152.4).

Self-invocations are few and far between. They are the compositions in the first person and are joined with the word 'I'; e.g., the hymns of Indra Vaikuntha (X.48;49), the hymns of Lava (X.119), and the hymns of Vak(X.125).

The word *deity* or the *devata* means the subject matter or the theme of the verse. These subjects on the physical plane would either concern the sphere of the Earth, with Agni as *devata* or the atmosphere with Vayu and Indra as *devata*, or the celestial sphere with Surya as *devata*. Thus there are, in fact, three deities only (Agni, Vayu or Indra, and Surya). They include all other deities. Similar to this, we shall have three such groups in non-physical realms (the mental and spiritual) too.

In the light of these deities, the Vedic verses can be interpreted on multiple planes: social plane, cosmic plane and mystic or spiritual plane. Sometimes we call these interpretations as *adhibhautika* (आधिभौतिक), *adhidaivika* (आधिदैविक) and *adhyatmika* (आध्यात्मिक). Dayananda has tried to interpret these verses on the social plane, and thus in his interpretation, *agni* may stand for a learned person, a leader of the society; *indra* would be a king or the officer commander of an army; *soma* would be a person of tran-

quality, or a graduate of a spiritual academy; *varuna* would be a learned preacher or a teacher or a defence minister; *savita* would be a teacher or inspirer; *pusan* would be the sustainer of people and hence, may be the head of an administration; *rbhu* would be an architect, and *marut* the soldier of an army.

On the cosmic plane, the *devatas* are Nature's bounties; for example *agni* would mean fire, electricity or the sun; *indra* is the sun or electricity or lightning; *soma* is the medicinal plant or curative principle in any medicinal herb; it may be moon too; *varuna* is water, sea or cosmic plasma; *mitra* is vital breath; *savita* is the sun; *visnu* is the sun or *yajna*; *pusan* is the earth; *ṛbhu*, the rays of the sun and *marut*, the atmospheric wind.

On the spiritual or mystic plane, the same devatas will have other connotations. Aurobindo has his own fascinating system of mystic interpretation; on this plane, these terms stand for apellations of one and the same God, sometimes they refer to the soul, and so often to the mental behaviours or to different states of consciousness. When applied to God, *agni* is foremost adorable and omniscient Lord; *indra* is the resplendent Lord; *soma* is the Lord worthy of our affection and devotion; *varuna* is our Lord of justice, venerable and acceptable; *savita* is the creator Lord; *visnu* is the omnipresent Lord; *pusan* is the sustainer Lord; and *marut* is the vital breath.

Some of the devatas are used singly, some like *asvins* are in dual number; some of them are used in plurals as *visvedevah*, *apah*, *rudrah*, *vasavah*, *adityah*, etc., and some of them exist in pairs as *mitra-varuna* or *indragni*. The most important 32 devatas are enumerated below:

agni, indra, soma, varuna, mitra, savita, visnu, pusan, ṛbhavah (pl.), usa, marut, (pl.), gravana, devah or visvedevah (pl.), rudra, vayu, asvins (twins), apah (pl.) sarasvati, adityah (pl.), rudrah (pl.), vasavah (pl.), bṛahaspati, brahmanaspati, aryaman, indrani, apsarasah (pl.), mitra-varuna, indragni, indra-soma, indra-visnu, and indra-parvata.

3

COMMENTARIES ON THE VEDAS : PRE-SAYANA AND SAYANA SCHOOLS

The revealed knowledge, the Veda, is an integrated one. The tradition says, that in the most natural way, it was given to the First Group of Men. In this connection we have in the Bṛhadaranyaka Upanisad, the following passage :

> It is—as, from a fire laid with damp fuel, clouds of smoke separately issue forth, so, lo, verily, from this great Being (*bhuta*) has been breathed forth that which is the Ṛgveda, the Yajurveda, the Samaveda, (hymns) of the Atharvans and Angirasas, legend (*itihasa*), ancient lore (*purana*), sciences (*vidya*), mystic doctrines (*upanisad*), verses (*sloka*), aphorisms (*sutra*), explanations (*anuvyakhyana*), commentaries (*vyakhyana*), sacrifice, oblation, food, drink, this world and the other, and all beings. From it, indeed, have all these been breathed forth. (IV.5.11)

This passage is an elaboration as if of the two Brahma Sutras: जन्माद्यस्य यतः and शास्त्रयोनित्वात्, which ascribe Brahman to be the sole creator of the universe, and the prime origin of all true knowledge.

The Satapatha and the Aitareya Brahmanas have also expressed the same sentiments in respect to the revelation of the Vedas :

(i) एवं वा अरेऽस्य महतो भूतस्य निःश्वसितं एतद् यद्
ऋग्वेद यजुर्वेदः सामवेदोऽथर्वांगिरसः (SBr. XIV. 5.4.10.)

From that Great Entity have been breathed out the Ṛgveda, the Yajurveda, the Samaveda and the Atharvaveda.

(ii) For the first three Vedas, the media of revelation have been the inspired sages Agni, Vayu and Aditya:

> अग्नेर्ऋग्वेद वायोर्यजुवेद : सूर्यात् सामवेद : ।
> ऋग्वेद एव अग्नेरजायत, यजुर्वेद वायो : सामवेद आदित्यात् (AiBr.XXV.7)

The first group of men, the group of seers, could understand and comprehend the Divine Word in the most natural way, but by and by, it became necessary to instruct the subsequent generations as to the mysteries and meanings of the Vadic Texts. This elaboration was not the verbal translation but an elucidation in the form that has been preserved to this day for us in the Brahmanas, the Aranyakas, the Upanisads and the elaborate systems of Indian philosophy.

Thus the Brahmanas, the Aranyakas, similarly the Sakha or branches of the Vedas, 1127 in number according to Indian tradition, the Vedangas, the Upangas and the Upavedas are in a way the exposition of the Vedic thoughts. In this context, Dayananda writes in his celebrated book, the Ṛgvedadi-bhasya-bhumika :

> The four Vedas have an inherent authority inasmuch as being the word of God, who is omniscient, omnipotent, and the possessor of universal learning, there can be no error, or shortcoming in them. The Vedas are to be considered their own authority like the sun or the lamp. As the sun and the lamp shining with their own light make all other physical objects visible, so the Vedas, too, shining with their own light make the other books of knowledge shine. The books which are opposed to the Vedas ought never to be accepted as authoritative. But the Vedas do not lose their authority even if they are opposed to other books because they are self-authoritative, and other books depend for their authority on them.
>
> The *mantra* or the *samhita* portion alone of the four Vedas is self-authoritative. The Brahmanas, being

only the commentaries on the Vedas, are authoritative only in so far as they are in agreement with them. Similarly, the 1127 branches of the Vedas also are of authority only in so far as they agree with them, because they too are only the glosses of the Vedas. The same may be said of the *angas* (limbs) of the Vedas: viz. orthoepy (*siksa*), grammar (*vyakarana*), etymology (*nirukta*), prosody (*chanda*), and astronomy (*jyotis*). The four *upavedas*, viz. the *ayurveda* or the medical science, the *dhanurveda*, the science of weapons, the *gandharva-veda* or the science of music (and aesthetics), and the *arthaveda*, or the science of technology, and production of wealth and its distribution, are in the same category.

As a prelude to his commentary, Dayananda further says in the same book, Ṛgvedadi-bhasya-bhumika :

> In the Vedic Commentary, we shall refer to the operational part only in so far as it will be deducible from the meaning of the word alone. We shall not, however, give a detailed description of the *viniyogas*, or the directions which ought to be followed whilst performing various *yajnas*, from the *agnihotra* to the *asvamedha*, according to the Vedic verses. The reason is that the true application (*viniyoga*) of the verses, in reference to operations are given in the Aitareya and Satapatha Brahmanas, and also the Purva-Mimamsa, and the Srauta Sutras etc. Their repetition shall disfigure this Commentary with the faults of tautological repetition and "grinding of the ground meal"; such faults are met with in non-*ṛsi*-written literature. Only so much the application of mantras to action-portion (i. e. the *viniyoga*) is to be accepted as has the authority of the Vedas at its back, is deducible from the meaning of the Vedic verses and is contained in the works mentioned above. In the same way we shall describe the worship-portion (*upasana*) also only in so far as it would be consistent with the context and the meanings of

> words, the reason being that it has been dealt with in detail in Patanjali's Yoga Sutras. We shall adopt the same method in dealing with the spirituality or metaphysical portion because it has been fully treated of in the Samkhya, the Vedanta and the Upanisads.

In fact, according to Dayananda, the ancient treatises of the Vedic times were merely an elaboration, and in some respects, thus, the commentaries of the Vedic Texts which constitute the divine knowledge.

It is difficult to assign any date to the Vedas revealed; it is difficult to say when they were brought to the written form; it is again equally difficult to say, when they were edited and arranged under different heads and sub-heads (*samhitikarana*) of which several classifications are available at present. It is a wonder that they could be preserved and are made available to us against all hazards of time and adverse circumstances. The entire credit goes to a group of people who took all care towards accuracy and precision, and traditionally handed over the entire treasure to their successive generations.

We do not know whether formal commentaries were ever deemed to be necessary. In the Nighantu and the Nirkuta of Yaska, we have an indication of general principles of interpretation. Undoubtedly, Yaska's field of acquaintance was very wide; in his Nirukta, he quotes from all the four Vedas and their *pada-pathas*, the Taittiriya Samhita, Maitrayani Samhita, the Kathaka Samhita, the Aitareya Brahmana, the Satapatha Brahmana, the Gopatha Brahmana, the Kausitaki Brahmana, the Sadvimsa Brahmana, the Taittiriya Brahmana, the DaivataBrahmana; the Pratisakhyas and sometimes from the Upanisads and Aranyakas also. Again, in his treatise, he refers to and quotes the opinions of the various schools of thought prevalent in his times,—the school of etymologists, the school of grammarians and the schools of ritualists, legendists and *naidanas* (para-etymologists), and very often he criticizes the views of his predecessors and contemporaries :

Agrayana (आग्रयण), Agrayana (आग्रायण), Acaryah, Eke (some one), Aitihasikah, Audumbarayana, Aupamanyava, Aurnavabha Kathaka, Katthakya, Kautsa, Kraustuki, Gargya, Galava, Carmasiras, Taitiki, Duhitṛ-dayadya, Naidanah, Nairuktah, Parivrajakah, Purve yajnikah, Brahmana, Yajnikah, Varsyayani, Vaiyakaranah, Satabalaksa, Sakatayana, Sakapuni, Sakalya, Sthaulasthivi, Haridravika.

Besides the schools of etymologists, we had in our history the schools of grammarians to assist scholars in interpreting the Vedic verses. Panini's Astadhyayi, and Patanjali's Great Commentary on it, known as the Mahabhasya, deal with the *laukika* (common Sanskrit) and the Vedic Sanskrit both. In his Sabdanusasanam, Panini mentions no less than ten *sabdikas* (or etymologists or linguists) : Apisali, Kasyapa, Gargya, Galava, Cakravarman, Bharadvaja, Sakatayana, Sakalya, Senaka, and Sphotayana. There is a further mention of about 16 scholars at other places : Siva or Mahesvara, Bṛhaspati, Indra, Vayu, Bharadvaja, Bhaguri, Pauskarasadi, Carayana, Kasakṛtsna, Santanu, Vaiyaghrapadya, Madhyandini, Raudhi, Saunaki, Gotama and Vyadi.

The rules of determining the *pada-patha* and *krama-patha*** of the Vedic verses have been clearly dealt with in the *pratisakhyas* of which the following are available these days :

**By *Pada-patha* is meant arranging each word of a Mantra separately without regards to the rules of *sandhi* (euphonic combinaton).

Krama-patha or *krama*-reading is a peculiar 'step-by-step' arrangement of a Vedic Text made to secure it from all possible error, by as it were, combinining the *samhita-patha* and the *Pada-patha*, i. e. by giving the words both as connected and unconnected with following and preceding words. We give here an example:

Samhita patha–ओषधयः संवदन्ते सोमेन सह राज्ञा ।

Pada Patha–ओषधयः । सं । वदन्ते । सोमेन । सह । राज्ञा ।

Krama Patha–ओषधयः सं । सं वदन्ते । वदन्ते सोमेन ।

सोमेन सह । सह राज्ञा । राज्ञेति राज्ञा ।

(i) the Ṛk-pratisakhya by Saunaka,
(ii) the Vajaseneya-pratisakhya by Katyayana,
(iii) the Sama-pratisakhya by Vararuci,
(iv) the Atharva-pratisakhya,
(v) the Taittiriya- pratisakhya, and
(vi) the Maitrayaniya-pratisakhya.

There is a mention of something like four other Pratisakhyas in our literature, but they appear to be obsolete now.

For many centuries after the attempts of the grammarians, etymologists, *naidanikas* and the authors of the Pratisakhyas, it had never been deemed necessary to write down the systematic comentaries of the Vedas. The present day available commentaries may be classified under the following heads :

(1) Pre-Sayana commentaries
(2) Commentary of Sayana, and the commentaries of this school,
(3) Commentaries by Western scholars,
(4) Commentaries by Dayananda,
(5) Post-Dayananda Commentaries.

Pre-Sayana Scholiasts.—Scholiasts of the pre-Sayana period are Skandasvamin, Udgitha and Venkata Madhava. The Vishveshvaranand Vedic Research Institute, Hoshiarpur undertook upon itself the arduous task of editing and publishing the Samhita, and the *pada-patha's* of the Ṛgveda along with critical editions of the commentaries on it by the three famous scholiasts, Skandasvamin, Udgitha and Venkata-Madhava and also, of the Summary by Mudgala of the commentary by Sayana, which, as has been claimed by the editors, practically, extracted the entire body of the latter except the details of ritualistic application (technically known as *viniyoga*) and grammar.

Not much is known about Skandasvami. From the colophon appended at the close of *adhyayas* in each *astaka* (given in the form of a couplet), it appears that he was a resident of some place known as "Valabhi" and his

father's name was Bhartṛdhruva. Bhagavat Dutta has assigned 630 A.D. as the date for his work. The commentary of Skandasvami is available on the following books and hymns :

From I.1.1 to I.56.1; I.62.1 to I.121.15; V.57.1 to V.61.19; VI.29.1 to VI.75.6

The commentary of Udgitha is available for the portions: from X.5.4 to X.12.5; X.13.2 to X.83.6.

Venkata Madhava's commentary is very brief, but is complete, that is, from I.1.1 to X.191.4.

Mudgala's *vṛtti* is from I.1.1 to I.121.15; V.9.1 to VI.9.6. It is so gratifying to note that all these commentaries have been consolidated and published by Vishva Bandhu of the *Vishveshvaranand Vedic Research Institute, Hoshiarpur.* (1965-1966).

Skandasvami's commentary was also published in fragments from · other sources earlier : Sambasiva Sastri's Trivandrum Edition; C. Kunhan Raja's Madras Edition.

Skandasvami belongs to the ritualistic school of Hinduism. In the beginning of his commentary on the very first verse (I.1.1.) he prays to Ganapati Vighnesa, the Elephant-god. Then he says, that the Vedic verses are of five kinds :

(i) *Praisah* (प्रैषाः), pertaining to summon, e.g., a priest is called upon to commence the ceremony. (दैव्याः शमितार आरभध्वम्, AiBr. II.6).

(ii) *Karanah* (करणाः), pertaining to an action. (इदमहमर्वावसोः सदने सीदामि, SBr. I.5.1.24)

(iii) *Kriyamananuvadinah* (क्रियमाणानुवादिनः), something spoken after the action accomplished. (युवा सुवासाः Ṛv. III.8.4).

(iv) *Sastrabhistavanadigatah* (शस्त्राभिष्टवनादिगताः), pertaining to praises of weapons etc. (आ त्वा रथं यथोतये, Ṛv. VIII. 68. 1).

(v) *Japanuvacandigatah* (जपानुवचनादिगताः), pertaining to sacred repetitions etc. तदद्य वाचं प्रथमं मसीय, Ṛv. X. 53.4; (आपो रेवतीः, Ṛv. X.30.12)

Skandasvami maintains that in all the five cases, one should not only pronounce the verses without understanding the meaning, he should know the contents of the verse also. This is the justification of writing down a commentary.

Venkata Madhava was the son of Venkatarya, as he says in the very opening lines of the couplets attached to the commentary : (श्री वेंकटार्यतनयो व्याचिकीर्षति माधवः); in the couplet given as a colophon at the end of several chapters, he calls himself as सुन्दरीसुतः (विश्वामित्र कुले जातः माधवः सुन्दरीसुतः), (colophon at the end of chapter 3 *of astaka* I). Madhava belonged to the family of Visvamitra, कौशिकानां कुले (*astaka* I, chapter I ; गाधिनिः माधवो नाम, (*astaka* I, chapter 2); वष्टकस्य कुले जातो, (*astaka* I, chapter 4); लोहितस्य कुले जातो (*astaka* I, chapter 5).

Perhaps his mother was Sundari, belonging to the Gotra of Vasistha. Lakshman Swarup has placed Madhava in the Tenth Century, and Bhagvat Datta between Samvat 1100 and 1200 Vikrami.

At the beginning of each chapter, Madhava has given his *karikas* containing several *slokas*, in which he has outlined the details of *ṛsis, devatas*, metres and other specifications. He has quoted in his writings from Katyayana's Sarvanukramani, the Nighantu, the Nirukta and the Bṛhaddevata.

All these commentators have followed the *yajnika* or ritualistic concepts in their commentaries. Anandatirtha was a great devotee of Narayana (God), and he belonged to the period 1198-1270. He has interpreted the word *agni* in the first verse (Ṛv. I.1.1.) as representing the adorable Lord.

SAYANA AND HIS COMMENTARIES.

Sayana easily ranks with some of our best scholiasts of classics, particularly Vedic. He was born in 1315 A. D. and died at the age of seventy-two in 1387. The colophon given at the end of the first *astaka* of the Ṛgveda commentary, known as the Madhaviya Vedartha-Prakasa, reads as follows :

इति श्रीमद् राजाधिराज परमेश्वर वैदिक मार्ग प्रवर्तक श्री वीरबुक्क भूपाल साम्राज्य धुरन्धरेण सायणाचार्येण विरचिते माधवीय वेदार्थ प्रकाश ऋक्-संहिता-भाष्ये प्रथमाष्टकेऽष्टमोऽध्यायः समाप्तः ।

This clearly shows that he was occupying a high rank in the kingdom of Bukka of the Vijayanagar State (South India). We also hear that he served as the Prime Minister in the kingdom of Kampana, the younger brother of Harihar. He was an Andhra Brahmin of Bharadvaja Gotra and Bodhayana Sutra. His family traditions belonged to the school of the Kṛsna Yajurveda (the Taittiriya Samhita), and the family was known for scholarship since several generations. We are told that his father's name was Mayana, and mother's name Srimati; His elder brother Madhava is equally reputed for deep learning; he was the preceptor of the Purva and Uttara Mimamsas both. Sayana's younger brother Bhoganatha was a reputed poet. Sayana himself was the disciple of Vidyatirtha, Bharatitirtha and Sri-Kanthacarya., associated with Sṛngeri Matha, which had received the Royal patronage of Harihar Bukka. Harihara I laid the foundations of his kingdom (1335 A. D.) on theocratic concepts, and he had therefore, taken Madhava and Sayana both in his Ministry. As we have said before, Sayana had worked earlier as Prime Minister to the Mandaladhisa Prince Kampana of Nellore Kuthappa, who knew that Sayana was not only a first rank scholar, he had military talents too. Kampana, however, died soon, and Sayana had to take care of the child prince Sangama also. When Sangama became major and matured, Prince Bukka took Sayana in his Ministry. Prince Bukka was very much interested in the Vedic lore, and he made Sayana incharge of the Veda Commentary project, which Sayana gladly accepted and accomplished with skill in collaboration with a band of scholars appointed for the purpose. Sayana has expressed his obligations to Prince Bukka in the opening verses of the commentary on the Ṛgveda.

After the death of Bukka, his son Harihara II became the head of the State. Under Harihara's patronage Sayana completed his commentary on the Atharvaveda;

this has been acknowledged by Sayana in this commentary on the Atharvaveda.**

Sayana was a Brahmin belonging to the branch of the Taittiriya Samhita, and therefore, at the first instance, he took up the Kṛṣna Yajurveda for his commentary. The work was followed by his commentaries on the Ṛgveda Samhita, and the Atharvaveda Samhita. These Vedic commentaries were followed by his commentaries on the Taittiriya Brahmana, the Taittiriya Aranyaka, the Aitareya Brahmana and the Aitareya Aranyaka, the Satapatha Brahmana, the Tandya Brahmana, the Sadvimsa Brahmana, the Samavidhana Brahmana, the Arseya Brahmana, the Devatadhyaya Brahmana, the Upanisad Brahmana, the Samhitopanisad Brahmana, and the Vamsa Brahmana.

** यत् कटाक्षेण तद् रूपं दधद् बुक्क महीपतिः
आदिशन्माधवाचार्यं वेदार्थस्य प्रकाशने । (Ṛgveda Commen.)
तत् कटाक्षेण तद् रूपं दधतो बुक्क भूपतेः
अभूद् हरिहरो राजा क्षीराब्धेरिव चन्द्रमाः ।
तन्मूलभूतं आलोच्य वेदमार्थविणाभिधम्
आदिशत् सायणाचार्यं तदर्थस्य प्रकाशने । (Atharva-veda Commen.)

4

WESTERN TRANSLATORS AND COMMENTATORS

Under the liberal patonage of Court of Directors of the East India Company, Professor Dr. F. Max Müller undertook his valuable edition of the Ṛgveda. Professor Max Müller speaks of the Vedas thus:

> "What can be more tedious than the Veda, and yet what can be more interesting, if once we know that it is the *first word spoken* by the Aryan Man ?
> "The Veda has a twofold interest : it belongs to the history of the world and to the history of India...As long as man continues to take an interest in the history of his race, and as long as we collect in libraries and museums the relics of former ages, the first place in that long row of books which contains the records of the Aryan branch of mankind, will belong for ever to the Ṛgveda."

It would be difficult to say who for the first time introduced the Vedas to the Western public. Wilson, in Introduction to the translation of the Ṛgveda, refers to the translation of the first *astaka*, Ogdoad, or eighth book of the Ṛgveda in English by the Rev. Mr. Stevenson and Dr. Roer, and fully in Latin by late Dr. Rosen; a translation in French, also, by M. Langlois, extending through four *astakas* or half the Veda was also published at Paris. The earliest publication, the work of Rev. Mr. Stevenson, extends only to the first three hymns of the third lecture, or section *(adhyaya)* out of the eight, which the first book or the first *astaka* consists of; Dr. Roer's translation was equally limited stopping with two sections or thirty-two hymns. Both these translations were published in India, but we are not sure, whether they are available now. Dr. Rosen's trans-

lation of the first book was complete as to the text, but his premature death interrupted his annotations. Wilson speaks highly of this work: "Although executed with profound scholarship and scrupulous exactitude, and everyway deserving of reliance as an authentic representative of the original, the Sanskrit is converted into Latin with such literal fidelity that the work scarcely admits of consecutive perusal, and is most of value as a reference; the translation is, in fact, subordinate to an edition of the text which it accompanies on the same page, and the work is designed less for general readers than for Sanskrit scholars and students of the Veda."

In respect to M. Langlois's translation, Wilson comments thus: "The principle followed by M. Langlois is the converse of that adopted by Dr. Rosen and he avowedly sought to give to the vague and mysterious passages of the original, a clear, simple, and intelligible interpretation. In this, it may be admitted, that he has admirably succeeded; but it may be sometimes thought that he has not been sufficiently cautious in his rendering of the text, and that he has diverged from its phraseology, especially as interpreted by the native Scholiast, more widely than is advisable." In respect to his own translation, Wilson says, "The present translation possesses at least the advantage over its predecessors of an accurate text, and it will be the fault of the translator, if he does not benefit by it. In converting the original into English, it has been his aim to adhere as strictly to the original Sanskrit as the necessity of being intelligible would allow." (July 1, 1850)

To the *Vedic Hymns* (published in the *Sacred Books of the East* Series), Volume I, F. Max Müller has appended a long Preface of 125 pages (March 1869), in which he has discussed at length the principles of translation of such classical texts. For several reasons, Professor Max Müller chose to start with the hymns devoted to *maruts*. In respect of the translators of the Veda, he says, "I hold that they ought to be decipherers and they are bound to justify every word of their translation in exactly the same manner in which the decipherers of hieroglyphic or cuneiform inscriptions justify every step they take." In this

connection he refers to the opinion of Professor von Roth, one of the most distinguished Vedic scholars of his times, who had always been in favour of metrical translations of the Vedic Hymns. Whilst Max Müller was more for giving abundant notes, Professor von Roth would throw the chief weight, not on the notes, but on the translation of the text. Max Müller also says, "On one point, however, I am quite willing to agree with my adversaries, namely, that a metrical rendering would convey a truer idea of the hymns of the Vedic *ṛsis* than a prose rendering. When I had to translate Vedic hymns into German, I have generally, if not always, endeavoured to clothe them in a metrical form. In English I feel unable to do so, but I have no doubt that future scholars will find it possible to add rhythm and even rhyme, after the true meaning of the ancient verses has once been determined." Of course, Max Müller confesses that very often, a metrical translation is an "excuse only for an inaccurate translation". In his Introduction, Max Müller discusses the merits and demerits of Grassmann's (based on Otto Böhtlingk and Rudolf Roth's great Dictionary) and of Ludwig's translation. (1891).

Theodor Aufrecht took great pains in producing Romanized reprint of the entire Ṛgveda with proper diacritical marks, including the accent *udatta* also. Its second edition appeared in 1877, and the photomechanical reprint of this second edition appeared in 1955 (published by Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, Darmstadt.).

Hermann Oldenberg collaborated with Max Müller, and the second volume of the Vedic Hymns in the SBE Series is his translation of Agni Hymns of the Ṛgveda taken from books I-V (about 130 hymns). Oldenberg's collection of papers on the Vedic subjects have come out in a single volume (*Kleine Schriften*, Teil I & II, of which Teil I is devoted to the Vedic Studies), published by Franz Steinep Verlaggmehwiesbaden).

Griffith's translation of the Ṛgveda appeared first in May, 1889, reprinted again in 1896 (in 2 volumes). It has now been reprinted in a single volume by Motilal Banarsidass, (1973). In his preface to the first edition, he

quotes Professor Weber (from the *History of Indian Literature*, by Albrecht Weber, Trübner's Oriental Series, 1878) as follows:

> "The reasons, however, by which we are fully justified in regarding the literature of India as the most ancient literature of which written records of an extensive scale have been handed down to us, are these: In the more ancient parts of the Ṛgveda Samhita, we find the Indian race settled on the north-western borders of India, in the Punjab, and even beyond the Punjab, on the Kubha or Kophen in Kabul. The gradual spread of the race from these seats towards the east, beyond the Saraswati and over Hindustan as far as the Ganges, can be traced in the later portions of the Vedic writings almost step by step. The writings of the following period, that of the epic, consist of accounts of the internal conflicts among the conquerors of Hindustan themselves, as, for instance, the Mahabharata; or of the farther spread of Brahmanism towards the south, as, for instance, the Ramayana. If we connect with this the first fairly accurate information about India which we have from a Greek source, viz., from Megasthenes, it becomes clear that at the time of this writer the brahmanising of Hindustan was already completed, while at the time of the Periplus, the very southernmost point of the Dekhan had already become the seat of the worship of Gauri, the wife of Siva. What a series of years, of centuries, must necessarily have elapsed before this boundless tract of country, inhabited by wild and vigorous tribes, could have been brought over to Brahmanism !"

I shall not comment on this passage of Griffith which needs careful scrutiny.

During the last hundred and twenty-five years, as a result of the labour of our Western scholars (also assisted by our own Indian scholars trained on the Western pattern), the interest into the Vedas, and the Vedic literature

grew but from an entirely different approach. This would be seen from the following types of observations: (i) Professor Wilson says: "To me, the verses of the Veda, except in their rhythm, and in a few rare passages, appear *singularly prosaic* for so early an era as that of their probable composition, and at any rate, their chief value lies not in their fancy but in their facts, social and religious." (ii) Professor Cowell says, "The poetry of the Ṛgveda is *singularly deficient in that simplicity and natural pathos or sublimity* which we naturally look for in the songs of an early period of civilization. The language and style of most of the hymns is singularly artificial....Occasionally we meet with fine outbursts of poetry, specially in the hymns addressed to the Dawn, but these are never long sustained and as a rule we find few grand similies or metaphors." (iii) To all these remarks, Griffith further adds, "The worst fault of all, in the Collection regarded as a whole, is the *intolerable monotony* of a great number of the hymns, a monotony which reaches its climax in the Ninth Book which consists almost entirely of invocations of Soma Pavamana, or the deified Soma juice in process of straining and purification. The great interest of the Ṛgveda is, in fact, *historical rather than poetical.* (IV) Griffith attached to the hymns of the Ṛgveda a fresh importance, for we find him saying, "As in its original language we see the roots and shoots of the languages of Greek, and Latin, of Kelt, Teuton and Slavonian, so the deities, the myths, and the religious beliefs and practices of the Veda throw a flood of light upon the religions of all European countries before the introduction of Christianity. (v) In this connection, Griffith further says, "As the science of comparative philology could hardly have existed without the study of Sanskrit, so the comparative history of religions of the world would have been impossible without the study of the Veda."

Griffith's translation of the Ṛgveda depends on the text of Max Müller (six-volume edition) and is partly based on Sayana's commentary. He has consulted the commentary of Sayana for the general sense of every verse, and for the meaning of every word, and has follow-

ed his interpretation whenever it seemed to him rational and consistent with the text, and with other passages in which the same word or words occur. Shall we regard Sayana as the true interpretor of the Ṛgveda, or for that purpose, any other text which he had commented on? The opinions have been conflicting: (i) Professor Wilson (whose translation of the Ṛgveda is rather a version of Sayana's paraphrase) is virtually of the opinion that Sayana's knowledge of his text has been "far beyond the pretensions of any European scholar" and he "must have been in possession of all the interpretation which had been perpetuated by traditional teaching from the earliest times." But as has been pointed out by Dr. J. Muir, Wilson in the notes to his translation admits that he "occasionally failed to find in Sayana a perfectly satisfactory guide," and Wilson at places has remarked that the "scholiast is evidently puzzled," and that his explanations are obscure.

Professor Roth, the author of the Vedic portion of the great St. Petersburg Lexicon, has given in his Preface an interesting comment, which we shall reproduce at length:

> So far as regards one of the branches of Vedic literature, the treatises on theology and worship, we can desire no better guides than these commentators, so exact in all respects, who follow their texts word by word, who so long as even the semblance of a misconception might arise, are never weary of repeating what they have frequently said before, and who often appear as if they had been writing for us foreigners rather than for their own priestly alumni who had grown up in the midst of these conceptions and impressions. Here...they are in their proper ground. The case, however, is quite different when the same men assume the task of interpreting the ancient collection of hymns...Here were required not only quite different qualifications for interpretation but also *a greater freedom of judgment* and *a greater breadth of view* and *of historical institutions*. Freedom of judgment, however, was wanting to priestly learning, whilst *in India no one has ever had any conception of historical development*. The very qualities which had made those commentators excellent guides to an understanding of the theological treatises render them unsuitable conductors on that far older and quite differently circumstanced domain.
>
> As the so-called classical Sanskrit was perfectly familiar to them

they *sought its ordinary idiom in the Vedic hymns also.* Since any difference in the ritual appeared to them inconceivable and the present forms were believed to have *existed from the beginning of the world*, they fancied that the patriarchs of the Indian religion must have sacrificed in the very same manner.

As the recognized mythological and classical system of their own age appeared to them unassailable and revealed varieties, they must necessarily (so the commentators thought) *be discoverable in that centre point of revelation, the hymns of the ancient ṛsis, who had, indeed, lived in familiar intercourse with the gods, and possessed far higher wisdom than the succeeding generations....*

It has never occurred to any one to make our understanding of the Hebrew books of Old Testament depend on the Talmud and the Rabbins, while there are not wanting scholars who hold it as the duty of a conscientious interpreter of the Veda to translate in conformity with Sayana, Mahidhara etc. Consequently we do not believe like H. H. Wilson, that Sayana, for instance, understood the expression of the Veda better than any European interpreter; but *we think that a conscientious European interpreter may understand the Veda far better and more correctly than Sayana.*

We do not esteem it our first task to arrive at that understanding of the Veda which was current in India some centuries ago, but *to search out the sense which the poets themselves have put into their hymns and utterances.*

Hence we are of opinion that the writings of Sayana and the other commentators do not form a rule for the interpreter, but are merely one of those helps of which the latter will avail himself for the execution of his undoubtedly difficult task, a task which is not to be accomplished at the first onset, or by any single individual..

We have, therefore, endeavoured to follow the *path prescribed* by philology, to derive from the texts themselves the sense which they contain, by a juxtaposition of all the passages which are cognate in diction or contains—a tedious and laborious path, in which neither the commentators nor the translators have preceded us.

It would be of interest to go through the opinion of Max Müller on the etymological texts like the *Nirukta.* He says:

As the authors of the Brahmanas were blinded by theology, the authors of the still later Niruktas were deceived by etymological fictions, and both conspired to mislead by their authority later and more sensible commentators, such as Sayana. Where

> Sayana has no authority to mislead him, his commentary is at all events rational; but still his scholastic notions would never allow him to accept the free interpretation which comparative study of these venerable documents forces upon the unprejudiced scholar We must therefore discover ourselves the real vestiges of these ancient poets.

Professor Benfey has something very interesting and useful to say :

> Every one who has carefully studied the Indian interpretations is awar : that absolutely no continuous tradition extending from the composition of the Veda to their explanation by Indian scholars can be assumed; that, on the contrary, between the genuine poetic remains of Vedic antiquity and their interpretations a long-continued break in tradition must have intervened, out of which at most the comprehension of some particulars may have been rescued and handed down to later times by means of liturgical usages and words, formulae, and perhaps, also, poems, connected therewith. Besides these remains of tradition, which must be estimated as very scanty, the interpreters of the Veda had, in the main, scarcely any other help than those which, for the most part, are still at our command, the usage of the classical speech, and the grammatical and etymological-laxicographical investigation of words.

In any case, whatever may be the shortcomings of Indian interpreters, one must remember, as Professor Goldstücker remarked: "Without the vast information, which those commentators have disclosed to us, without their method of explaining the obscurest text,—in one word, without their scholarship, we should still stand at the outer doors of Hindu antiquity." In fact, Goldstücker ridicules the assertion that a European scholar can understand the Veda more correctly than Sayana, or arrive more nearly at the meaning which the *ṛsis* gave to their own hymns.

In the galaxy of the Western scholars who devoted themselves to the study of the Veda we have the following: Professors Roth, Benfey, Weber, Ludwig, Max Müller, Grassmann, H. H. Wilson, Monier Williams, Dr. John Muir, Wallis, Griffith, M. Bergaigne, Oldenberg, Geldner and Kaegi, Peterson and others. To this list, one must add the name of W. D. Whitney for the pains

he took on the translation of the Atharvaveda and of Bloomfield for his *Vedic Concordance.*

WESTERN THEORIES

Western theories based on lack of sympathy.—Whilst introducing *Modern Theories* in one of his chapters, Aurobindo remarks:

> "It was the curiosity of a foreign culture that broke after many centuries the seal of final authoritativeness which Sayana had fixed on the ritualistic interpretation of the Veda. The ancient scripture was delivered over to a scholarship laborious, bold in speculation, ingenious in its flights of fancy, conscientious according to its own lights, but *ill-fitted to understand* the method of the old mystic poets; for it was void of any sympathy with that ancient temperament, unprovided with any clue in its own intellectual or spiritual environment to the ideas hidden in the Vedic figures and parables. The result has been of a double character, on the one side the beginning of a more minute, thorough and careful as well as a freer handling of the problems of Vedic interpretation, on the other hand, a final exaggeration of its apparent material sense and the complete obscuration of its true and inner secret." (*Aurobindo,* Vol. X, p.22)

By modern theories, we mean the theories which have been advanced by the comparative mythologists, linguists, philologists, anthropologists and scholars in some of the countries of West. When they gained their first acquaintance with Indian literature, its culture and customs, they tried to interpret it in consonance with the mythology and culture of other nations in East, Middle-East and some other lands. In this context, these scholars laboriously developed the modern theory of Veda also, which starts with the conception (for which *Sayana* is responsible) of the Vedas as the hymnal of an early, primitive and largely barbaric society, crude in its moral and religious conceptions, rude in its outlook upon the world that environed it. The ritualism which Sayana accepted as part of a divine knowledge and as endowed with a mysterious efficacy, European scholarship accepted as an elaboration of the old savage propitiatory sacrifices

offered to imaginary superhuman personalities who might be benevolent or malevolent according as they were worshipped or neglected. (*Aurobindo*, Vol. X, p. 23).

The story does not stop here. "The historical element admitted by Sayana," so says Aurobindo, "was readily seized on and enlarged by new renderings and new explanation of the allusions in the hymns developed in an eager hunt for clues to the primitive history, manners and institutions of those barbarous races." And thus Sayana's interpretation of the Vedas, instead of bringing credit to the race and culture, which accepted Vedas as sacred authority, brought a disregard and disrepute, and damaged more than did any good to the reputation they deserved on account of their contributions in other fields (in the field of philosophical experiences, as evident from the *upanisads*, in linguistics and grammar, as evident from Panini and Patanjali's works, in astronomy, logic, mathematics, surgery and medicine). The first credit goes to Dayananda for having raised a voice against the traditional scholiasts, like Sayana and others.

At the time of the beginning of the Western interpretation, the situation was something like this. The naturalistic element played a very important role. The obvious identification of the Vedic gods in their external aspects with certain Nature–Powers was used as the starting-point for a comparative study of Aryan mythologies; the hesitating identification of certain of the less prominent deities as Sun-Powers was taken as a general clue to the system of primitive myth-making and elaborate sun-myth and star-myth theories of comparative mythology were founded. In this new light the Vedic hymnology has come to be interpreted as a half-superstitious, half-poetic allegory of Nature with an important astronomical element. The rest is partly contemporary history, partly the formulae and practices of sacrificial ritualism, not mystic, but merely primitive and superstitious.

The theory of emergence from the mere savage was dominatingly a concept of the Nineteenth Century. We now know that remarkable civilizations existed in China, Egypt, Chaldea and Assyria many thousands of years ago,

and it is now coming generally to be agreed that Greece and India were no exceptions to the general high culture of Asia and Mediterranean races. Aurobindo in this context rightly says, that "if the Vedic Indians do not get the benefit of this revived knowledge, it is due to the survival of the theory with which European erudition started that they belonged to the so-called Aryan race and were on the same level of culture with the early Aryan Greeks, Celts, Germans as they are represented to us in the Homeric poems, the old Norse Sagas and the Roman accounts of the ancient Gaul and Teuton. Hence has arisen the theory that these Aryan races were northern barbarians who broke in from their colder climes on the old and rich civilizations of Mediterranean Europe and Dravidian India."

It is not for me to discuss in details many such theories which have been started in the West on flimsy grounds and insufficient evidences. The indications in the Veda on which this tneory of a recent Aryan invasion is built, are very scanty in quantity and uncertain in their significance. The distinction between Aryan and un-Aryan seems on the mass of evidence to indicate a *cultural rather than a racial difference*. Nor is it a certain conclusion from the data we possess that the early Aryan cultures—supposing the Celt, Teuton, Greek and Indian to represent one common cultural origin,—were really undeveloped and barbarous (*Aurobindo*, Vol. X, p. 24).

The methodology adopted in comparative mythology is not very happy one. It has founded its interpretation on a theory which saw nothing between the early savage and Plato or the *upanisads*. It has taken for granted that the early religions have been founded on the wonder of barbarians waking up suddenly to the astonishing fact that such strange things as Dawn and Night and the Sun existed and attempting in a crude, barbaric, imaginative way to explain their existence. We have no space here to discuss these aspects in details. There could be much that would be useful in the speculation of comparative mythology; but in order that the bulk of its results should be sound and acceptable, it must use a more patient and

consistent method and organize itself as part of a well-founded science of Religion. The mere identification of Greek and Sanskrit names and the ingenious discovery that Heracles pyre is an image of the setting Sun or that Paris and Helen are Greek corruption of the Vedic *sarama* and *panis* make an interesting diversion for an imaginative mind, but can by themselves lead to no serious result even if they should prove to be correct. Nor is their correctness beyond serious doubt, for it is the vice of the fragmentary and imaginative method by which the sun and star myth interpretations are built up that they can be applied with equal ease and convincingness to any and every human tradition, belief or even actual event of history.* With this method, so says, Aurobindo, we can never be sure where we have hit on a truth or where we are listening to a mere ingenuity. (*Aurobindo*, Vol. X, p. 27).

Modern Indian Interpreters—The whole problem of the interpretation of Vedic texts shall perhaps ever remain an open field in which any contribution that can throw light upon the problem should be welcome. Three contributions on Western lines have proceeded from Indian scholars, but one of the profoundest contributions has been by an Indian Savant, Dayananda, on indigenous lines with freshness of outlook and depth of vision. The lines showed by him opened new vistas for Aurobindo in developing his psychological approach. Those who followed the Western methods were Bal Gangadhar Tilak, T. Paramasiva Aiyer, and A. C. Das. Tilak in the *Arctic Home in the Vedas* has accepted the general conclusions of European scholarship, but by a fresh examination of the Vedic Dawn, the figure of the Vedic Cows and the astronomical data of the hymns, has established at least a strong probability that the Aryan races descended originally from the Arctic regions in the glacial period. A. C. Das, another scholar of repute from Bengal in the *Rgvedic India* has contradicted Tilak's views, and has almost

** E.g. Christ and his twelve disciples are, a great scholar assures us, the Sun and the twelve months. The career of Napolean is the most perfect *sun-myth* in all legend or history. (*Aurobindo*)

conclusively shown from the Vedic texts that the Punjab, the land of five rivers and the adjoining area was the cradle home of the Vedic Aryans. T. Paramasiva Aiyer by a still bolder departure has attempted to prove that the whole of the Ṛgveda is a figurative representation of the geological phenomena belonging to the new birth of our planet after its long continued glacial death in the same period of terrestrial evolution. Whether one accepts or not, he has thrown a new light on the great riddle of *ahi vṛtra* and the release of the seven rivers.

None of the above authors commented on the entire text of even a single veda. Dayananda, however, took upon himself the stupendous task of commenting on the Yajurveda and the Ṛgveda as a new venture, quite independent from the traditional commentaries of Sayana (his life was cut short, and he could not proceed beyond Mandala VI of the Ṛgveda). As Aurobindo writes, it was the remarkable attempt by Svami Dayananda, the founder of the Arya Samaj, to re-establish the Veda as *a living religious* Scripture. Dayananda took as his basis a free use of the old Indian philology, which he found in the Nirukta. Himself a great Sanskrit scholar, he handled his material with remarkable power and independence. Especially creative was his use that peculiar feature of the old Sanskrit tongue which is best expressed by a phrase of Sayana's,—the *multisignificance of roots*, we shall see, that the right following of this clue is of capital importance for understanding the peculiar method of the Vedic ṛsis. (*Aurobindo*, Vol. X, p. 29).

"Dayananda's interpretation", writes Aurobindo, "of the hymns is governed by the idea that the Vedas are a plenary revelation of religious, ethical and scientific truth. Its religious teaching is monotheistic and the Vedic gods are different decriptive names of the one Deity; they are at the same time indicative of His powers as we see them working in Nature and by a true understanding of the sense of the Vedas we could arrive at all the scientific truths which have been discovered by modern research".

At times there has been a misunderstanding both in the circles of the Arya Samaj and outside, whilst inter-

preting the hypothesis of Dayananda inasmuch as the Vedas contain the germ (or seed) of all true knowledge (including philosophy and science). Dayananda always regards *sruti* as different from *sastra*. The Vedas constitute the *sruti*, as revealed, and the *sastras* are developed as *systematics* to understand the *sruti* and God's creation, both. The *sruti* always has the germ of the *sastra* in it, but is not the *sastra*. In this sense, Dayananda regards the *sruti* to be constituting the germ of all true knowledge.

The old nations have to their credit great scientific, literary and creative discoveries and conceptions. In some fields, the ancient races, it ought to be admitted, were far more advanced than is yet recognized. The Egyptians and Chaldeans, we now know, had discovered much that has since been rediscovered by modern science and much also that has not been rediscovered. The ancient India was inspired with the Vedic studies, and in the context of these studies, India developed her logic, mathematics, astronomy, medical sciences, grammar, prosody and aesthetics besides metaphysics, and spiritual sciences. Dayananda referred to this glory of India, which was built up round the teaching of the Vedas, a living force.

Aurobindo, whilst complimenting, says, "Dayananda has given the clue to the linguistic secret of the *ṛsis* and re-emphasised one central idea of the Vedic religion, the idea of the One Being with the Devas expressing in numerous names and forms the many-sidedness of His unity." (*Aurobindo*, Vol. X, p. 31).

5

PRE-DAYANANDA AND POST-DAYANANDA PERIOD OF INTERPRETATION : SAYANA—DAYANANDA—AUROBINDO

Aurobindo presents the problem of the Vedic interpretation in the following words :

> "We have in the Rgveda.--the true and the only Veda in the estimation of European scholars,—a body of sacrificial hymns couched in a very ancient language which presents a number of almost insoluble difficulties. It is full of ancient forms and words which do not appear in later speech and have often to be fixed in some doubtful sense by intelligent conjecture; a mass even of the words that it has in common with classical Sanskrit seem to bear or at least to admit another significance than in the later literary tongue; and a multitude of its vocables, especially the most common, those which are most vital to the sense, are capable of a surprising number of unconnected significances, which may give according to our preference in selection, quite different complexions to whole passages, whole hymns, and even to the whole thought of the Veda." (*Aurobindo, Vol.X. p.2*)

During the past several centuries, there have been at least three types of major attempts to fix the sense of these ancient litanies : (i) The first of these attempts exists only by fragments in the *brahmanas*, and the *upanisads.* (ii) An interpretation almost in the same strain has been followed by another Indian scholar Sayana—this is the traditional ritualistic interpretation of the Vedic texts, as if the entire text of the Ṛgveda (and the Yajurveda too), was meant to be used for one or the other purpose in sacrifices. (iii) Lastly, we have another mode of interpretation which has been introduced by modern Western scholarship (European and American), based on comparisons and conjectures, i.e. claimed to be based on the comparative philology, and systematic study of human behaviours through ages in different lands.

In respect to the traditional ritualistic interpretation, and the conjectural Western interpretations, Aurobindo rightly remarks as follows :

> "Both of them present one characteristic in common, the *extraordinary incoherence* and *poverty of sense*, which their results stamp upon the ancient hymns. The separate lines can be given, whether naturally or by force of conjecture, a good sense, or a sense that hangs together, the diction that results, if garish in style, if loaded with otiose and decorative epithets, if developing extraordinarily little of meaning in an amazing mass of gaudy figure and verbiage, can be made to run into intelligible sentences; but *when we come to read the hymns as a whole*, we seem to be in the presence of men who, unlike the earlier writers of other races, were incapable of coherent and natural expression or of connected thought. Except in the briefer and simpler hymns the language tends to be either obscure or artificial; the thoughts are either unconnected or have to be forced and beaten by the interpreter into a whole. The scholar in dealing with text is obliged to substitute for interpretation a process almost of fabrication. We feel that he is not so much revealing the sense as hammering and forging rebellious material into some sort of shape and consistency." (*Aurobindo, Vol. X. p.* 3)

These observations of Aurobindo are valid in regards to the interpretations given by either Sayana or by our Western scholars like Max Müller, Geldner, Oldenberg, Griffith or Wilson. If these interpretations are accepted, then the hymns of the Ṛgveda (and other Vedas) would be justifiably qualified by such terms as "*obscure and barbarous compositions.*" But one thing is exceptionally remarkable. These so called obscure and barbarous compositions have had the most splendid good fortune in all literary history. They have been the reputed source not only of some of the world's richest and profoundest religions, but of some of its subtlest metaphysical philosophies. In the fixed tradition of thousands of years they have been revered as the origin and standard of all that can be held as authoritative and true in Brahmanas, Upanisads, in the six Systems of Indian philosophy, and even in the later and medieval literature of Indian thought. They have been invariably regarded as the literature of ultimate Supreme Authority

(*svatah pramana*). They have inspired the teachings of all saints, seers and sages. The name borne by them has been the Veda, the knowledge, a term which stands for the highest spiritual truth of which the human mind is capable. But, as Aurobindo rightly remarks, if we accept the current interpretations, whether Sayana's or the modern theory, the whole of this sublime and sacred reputation is *a colossal fiction*. If we accept the traditional or western interpretations, the hymns would be nothing more than the naive superstitious, fancies of untaught and materialistic barbarians concerned only with the most external gains and enjoyments and ignorant of all but the most elementary moral notions and religious aspirations. Of course, rituals have some value in life, but the entire Vedic texts have nothing else in them but rituals, is an idea repugnant to any rational thought. As we have said, the Vedas were held in the highest esteem by all the systems of Indian philosophy, particularly of the Upanisads, and it is so well known that the true foundation or starting point of religions and philosophies are these Upanisads, and if so, if the Vedas are to be traditionally interpreted, then these Upanisads have to be conceived as a revolt of philosophical and speculative minds against the ritualistic materialism of the Vedas. The entire Vedanta, the Yoga, Samkhya, the Nyaya or the Vaisesika system can be directly traced to elaborate the theses propounded in the Vedic texts.

The European scholars have confused issues beyond expectations. Aurobindo writes in this context :

> "But this conception, supported by misleading European parallels, realy explains nothing. Such profound and ultimate thoughts, such systems of subtle and elaborate psychology as are found in the substance of the Upanisads, do not spring out of a previous void. The human mind in its progress marches from knowledge to knowlege, or it renews and enlarges previous knowledge that has been obscured and overlaid, or it seizes on old imperfect clues and is led by them to new discoveries. The thought of the Upanisads supposes great origins anterior to itself, and these in the original theories are lacking. The hypothesis, invented to fill the gap, that these ideas were borrowed by barbarious Aryan invaders from the civilized Dravidians, is a conjecture, supported only by other conjectures. It is indeed coming to be

doubted whether the whole story of an Aryan invasion through the Punjab is not *a myth of the philologists.* (*Aurobindo, Vol. X. p. 4*).

In fact, the Veda has to be seen from another perspective. It is the revelation of an age anterior to our intellectual philosophies. It is *sruti* and not a *sastra.* In that original epoch, when it was given to us, thought proceeded by methods other then those of our logical reasoning and speech (the accepted *modes of expression*) which in our present day habits would be inadmissible. The wisest then depended on *inner experience* and the suggestions of the intuitive complex for all knowledge that ranged beyond mankind's ordinary perceptions and daily activities. Their aim was illumination, as Aurobindo puts it, not logical conviction, their ideal the *inspired seer,* not the accurate reasoner, The *rsi* was not the individual composer of the hymn, but the *seer* (*drasta*) of an eternal truth and an impersonal knowledge. The language of the Veda itself is *sruti,* a rhythm not composed by the intellect but *heard,* a divine *word* that came vibrating out of the Infinite to the inner audience of the man who had previously made himself fit for the impersonal knowledge (*Aurobindo,* Vol. X. p.8). So speaks Dayananda about the Vedas, so spoke the older *ṛsis,* and so speaks Aurobindo about the Vedic revelation. The words themselves, *dṛsti* and *sruti,* sight and hearing, are Vedic expressions; these and cognate words signify, in the esoteric terminology of the hymns, revelatory knowledge and the contents of inspiration (*sabda, artha,* and the *sambandha*).

There is a progressive preparedness for the reception of the divine revelation in the hymns themselves so often. *Knowledge itself was a travelling* and a reaching, or a finding and a winning (as Aurobindo puts it); the revelation of the *mysterious* comes only at the end; the light was the prize of a final victory. There is continually in the Veda this image of the jorney, the Soul's march on the path of Truth. On that path as it advances, it also ascends; new vistas of power and light open to its aspiration; it wins by a heroic effort its enlarged spiritual possessions. If a cohe-

rence is to be appreciated in a particular hymn, this type of approach has to be constantly kept in mind. The hymn would by and by raise you from an exoteric to an esoteric realm. A particular verse might be referring to mundane fire for the time being, but by and by it would raise you to the realm of the cosmic Fire and then finally take you to the Inner Fire, the Divine Warmth, which is the secret of life. And similarly, a casual reference to ordinary broad day light or the light appearing every day at dawn, may take you through a series of successive steps to the cosmic light and finally to the Inner Spiritual Light of one's own consciousness or even the Divine Light of the Supreme Self.

If one gets familiarized with this technique of the Soul's march on the path of Truth, then to him, the Veda would neither be a collection of verses, being an attempt to set down the results of intellectual or imaginative speculations, nor would it consist of the dogmas of a primitive religion.

The Vedas were revealed to the earliest man and since then, they were traditionally handed down to posterity with utmost care in accuracy. It is difficult to say when they were for the first time classified into the details of the *samhitas*. But there are certain considerations which justify us in ascribing to it an almost enormous antiquity. An accurate text, accurate in every syllable, accurate in every accent, was a matter of supreme importance to the Vedic ritualists; for on scrupulous accuracy depended the effectuality of the sacrifice. We are told, for instance, in the Brahmanas the story of *tvastṛ*, who, performing a sacrifice to produce an avenger of his son slain by Indra, produced, owing to an error of accentuation, not a slayer of Indra, but one of whom Indra must be the slayer (*indra-satru*). The prodigious accuracy of the ancient Indian memory is also notorious and proverbial. And the sanctity of the text prevented such interpolations, alterations, modernizing revisions, as have been replaced by the present form of the Mahabharata, the ancient epic of the Kurus.

The ancients were not satisfied with the *samhita pathas* of the Vedic verses in which the rigid rules of euphonic combination of separate words (*sandhi*) were

applied. The Vedic *ṛsis*, as was natural in a living speech, followed the ear rather than fixed rule; some times they combined the separate words, sometimes they left them uncombined. And therefore, they have not only retained with accuracy the *samhita pathas*, but the *pada-pathas* also with proper accentuation. In these *pada-pathas*, all euphonic combinations are again resolved into the original and separate words and even components of compound words indicated.

We shall not enter here into the details involving the change of a *samhita-patha* into the corresponding *pada-patha* and vice versa.

A few illustrations of the *samhita-patha* and the *pada-patha* for the same Ṛgvedic verse are given below :

1. *Samhita-patha*

अग्निमीळे पुरोहितं यज्ञस्य देवमृत्विजम् ।
होतारं रत्नधातमम् ।

Pada-patha

अग्निम् । ईळे । पुरःऽहितम् । यज्ञस्य । देवम् । ऋत्विजम् ।
होतारम् । रत्नऽधातमम् ।

2. *Samhita-patha*

अग्नि : पूर्वेभिर्ऋषिभिरीड्यो नूतनैरुत । स देवाँ एह वक्षति ।

Pada-patha

अग्नि : । पूर्वेभि: । ऋषिऽभि : । ईड्य: । नूतनै: । उत ।
स: । देवान् । आ । इह । वक्षति ।

(These *pada-pathas* would be a help in proper *ghana-pathas*, *mala-pathas*, *jata-pathas* etc.) besides the interpretations, depending on accents also.)

Coherence in the Vedic hymns.

We can thus entirely rely on the Vedic texts available to us today, in the form of the *pada-patha*. Very few are the instances in which the exactness or the sound judgment of the *pada-patha* can be called into question. "We have then" Aurobindo says, "as our basis a text which we can confidently accept and which, even if we hold it in a few instances doubtful or defective, does not at any rate call for that often licentious labour of emendation to which some of the European classics lend themselves." Aurobindo further

says, "Nor is there, in my view, any good reason to doubt that we have the hymns arrayed, for the most part in the right order of their verses, and in their exact entirety. The exceptions, if they exist, are negligible in number and importance. When the hymns seem to us incoherent, it is because we do not understand them. Once the clue is found, we discover that they are perfect wholes as admirable in the structure of their thought as in their language and their rhythms." (*Aurobindo*, Vol. X. p. 16).

Natural meaning of Vedic terms. The only literature of the closest proximity to the revealed Vedic texts, is of the *brahmanas* and the *aranyakas*; and both of them belong to the ritualistic period. Perhaps, there must have been a gap of milleniums between the dawn of the Vedic knowledge, and the liturgical books of the Brahmanic period. And therefore, Aurobindo is right when he says, that "for even in the earlier days of classical erudition, the ritualistic view of the Veda was already dominant, the original sense of the words, the lines, the allusions, the clue to the structure of the thought had been long lost or obscured; nor was there in the erudite that intuition or that spiritual experience which might have partly recovered the lost secret. In such a field, mere learning, especially when it is accompanied by an ingenious scholastic mind, is often a snare as a guide." (*Aurobindo*, Vol. X. p. 16-17).

There has been a great contribution of the people of the ritualistic period, in that they preserved the Vedic texts with great care, but on the contrary, the greatest disservice they did, was that they obscured the natural meaning of the Vedic texts. The mantras were held sacred by them, but the real meanings were lost to them, and therefore, for the last so many centuries, the Vedas ceased to have any dynamic impact on the life of an individual or on society. Thanks to the insight and inspirations of Dayananda at the close of the Nineteenth Century, followed by spiritual experiences of another great savant of the present century, Sri Aurobindo, there has been a complete metamorphosis of our thinking and evaluation of the Vedic texts. The greatest contribution of these two great sons of the soil has been the emancipation of the Vedic interpretations from

the tragic hands of ritualistic periods and medieval scholiasts.

Max Müller and other scholars of the west laboured hard on the Vedic texts, not only as pure academicians, but they were also sure, that if they could show to Indian people how meaningless and debasing the concept of their own Vedic scholiasts were, their future generation, more enlightened on account of the advances of modern philosophy and sciences, would refuse to accept the Vedas and the Vedic theology as their solace.*

The great sage Yaska compiled one of the earliest lexicons of the Vedic terms, known as the Nighantu, and he wrote his own commentary on this book, known as the Nirukta. The Nighantu constitutes one of the six *vedangas*, the others being the *siksha* (orthography) by Panini, *chanda* (prosody) by Pingala, *jyotis* (astronomy) by Lagadha, *vyakarana* (grammar) by Panini, and *kalpa* (litany and liturgy) by various scholars of the ritualistic period. The study of these *vedangas* is supposed to be very essential if one wishes to arrive at the correct interpretation of the Vedic texts. But no academic knowledge of our rigorous scholarly disciplines can be a substitute of *inspirations* and

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*** Max Müller, as a true Christian, was convinced of the fact, that his translations of the Vedic Hymns based on the interpretations of Sayana and other scholiasts, would take away the faith of Indians from the Vedas, and in consequence, Indians would also become Christians in due course. We are told that he wrote a letter to his wife in 1868, in which he remarked thus, whilst he was busy in editing the Ṛgveda :**

> **"I hope I shall finish that work and I feel convinced, though I shall not live to see it, yet this edition of mine (of the Ṛgveda) and the translation of the Vedas will hereafter tell to a great extent on the fate of India and on the growth of millions of souls in that country. It is the root of their religion, and to show them what the root is, is, I feel sure, the only way of uprooting all that has been sprung from it during the last three thousand years."**

Of course, the result has been otherwise. Due to Dayananda and people who have shared his views, the Vedas are much more popular in Indian society today than in Max Müller's days, and their teachings have started revitalizing human mind, and now again they have started exercizing a dynamic impact on our society.

personal experiences, of a highly elevated self. The seers of the *upanisads*, could, therefore, reveal the mysteries of the Vedic texts much more than any other academician. We are fortunate in this respect that persons of the eminence of Panini (the celebrated author of the Astadhyayi) and his commentator, Patanjali (the author of the Mahabhasya) were not only academicians but were also inspired seers of deep experiences, and so were the authors of the six systems of Indian philosophy.

Every great interpreter of the Vedic texts has taken help from Yaska, the lexicographer and the etymologist, and also from the derivations given in the Brahmanas, in the Unadi kosa, in the Pratisakhyas, and from Panini's grammar as well as from the Mahabhasya. All these books accept the principle of the multiplicity of the Vedic interpretations, the interpretation belonging to three major categories: (i) the historical, or *sasvata itihasa*, the natural perpetual cosmologic history, (ii) the ritualistic, pertaining to the *yajnas*, and (iii) the spiritual or the mystic with deeper inner meanings. Dayananda has added one more category to it, as would be seen from his commentaries. To Dayananda, the Vedas constitute the living force, both mundane and spiritual. His is the dynamic realistic philosophy of life, and compatible with this concept he gets inspirations from the Vedas for all the disciplines of life. To him, the life is real and purposeful and the prosperity in mundane life is a step of advancement towards the attainments of the spiritual realm. And therefore, he has declared that the Vedas constitute a store house of all true knowledge for the evolution of man. To him, God is not only a creator of the Universe, living and non-living, He is prime source of all knowledge also, and therefore, there can never arise a conflict between true sciences, spiritual philosophies, and the right conducts of theological practices. And therefore, Vedas contain the natural material to inspire us in all the multi-disciplines of life. That code alone could be regarded as rightful, which leads to individual and social success in life and to the spiritual attainments of the highest order. God Himself is the Highest Personification of an ethical ideal, and this

ideal has to be emulated in every sphere of human life, mundane and transcendental.

Of course, Sayana, or as a matter of fact, any other scholiast of the period, could not have been inspired with this realism and purposefulness of human life, and therefore, his interpretations, howsoever masterly, fall short of natural expectations. And, therefore, Aurobindo is correct when he says :

"Yet, even for the external sense of the Veda, it is not possible to follow either Sayana's method or his results without the largest reservation. It is not only that he admits in his method licenses of language and construction which are unnecessary and sometimes incredible, nor that he arrives at his results, after, by a surprising inconsistency in his interpretation of common Vedic terms and even of fixed Vedic formulae. These are the defects of detail unavoidable perhaps in the state of materials with which he had to deal. But it is the central defect of Sayana system that he is obsessed always by the ritualistic formula and seeks continually to force the sense of the Veda into that narrow mould. So he loses many clues of the greatest suggestiveness and importance for the ancient scriptures,—a problem quite as interesting as its internal sense. The outcome is a representation of the *ṛsis*, their thoughts, their culture, their aspirations, so narrow and poverty-stricken that, if accepted, it renders the ancient reverence for the Veda, its sacred authority, its divine reputation quite incomprehensible to the reason, or only explicable as a blind and unquestioning tradition of faith starting from an original error." (*Aurobindo*, Vol. X. p. 18)

The errors in Sayana's interpretations are as follows:

(i) *Sruti* is known for deep spiritual, philosophic and psychological meanings which ascribe sanctity to the text. Sayana usually refuses to enter into these depths. He does not go sufficiently beyond the current verbal interpretations. He mentions for instance, but not to admit it, an old interpretation of *vṛtra* as the coverer (आच्छादकः,-*Dayananda*) who holds back from man the objects of his desire and his aspirations. For Sayana *vṛtra* is either simply the enemy or the physical cloud demon who holds back the water and

has to be pierced by the Raingiver.

(ii) Sayana is led away by the Pauranic myths and mythological events, as if the mythologies existed prior to the revelation of the texts. He does not go deeper into the root-meanings or the etymologies or mystic sense behind these terms. The stories of the Puranas were woven round the Vedic words, capable of natural interpretations, millenniums of years afterwards. The Vedas were always held sacred in Indian Society, and the words, used in common parlance, were given as *proper names* to family children or to the personal figures in literature. The names of the four *ṛsis*, Agni, Vayu, Aditya and Angiras, and so many other *ṛsis*, associated with the Vedic hymns also belong to this category, not to speak of kings and princes of repute, who came to be so well known in epics and mythologies. A few such instances are quoted below. The modern Vedic scholars, who seek to interpret history on the basis of Vedic texts, have erred a step ahead of Sayana in this repect.

1. **Rama** and **Kṛsna** in the Atharvaveda :
   नक्तंजातास्योषधे रामे कृष्णे असिक्नि च (Av. I. 23.1).
2. **Dasaratha** in the Ṛgveda :
   चत्वारिंशद् दशरथस्य शोणाः (Ṛv. I. 126.4).
3. **Bharata** in the Ṛgveda :
   आसद्या बर्हिर्भरतस्य सूनवः (Ṛv. II. 36.2).
4. **Visvamitra** in the Ṛgveda :
   विश्वामित्राय ददतो मघानि (Ṛv. III. 53.7).
   विश्वामित्रा अरासत (Ṛv. III. 53.13)
5. **Visvamitra** and **Jamadagni** in the Ṛgveda :
   सुतं सातेन यद्यागमं वां प्रति विश्वामित्र-जमदग्नी दमे
   (Ṛv. X. 167.4).
6. **Vena** in the Ṛgveda :
   वेनन्ति वेनाः पतयन्त्या दिशः (Ṛv. X. 64.2).
   वेना दुहन्त्युक्षणं गिरिष्ठाम् (Ṛv. IX. 85.10).
   (Vena Bhargava is the seer of the hymns IX. 85 and X. 123, whilst *vena* is also the *devata* of X. 123. This *vena* has been identified with the planet Venus also, X. 123.1).

7. **Pururavah** and **Urvasi** in the Ṛgveda :
   पुरूरवः पुनरस्तं परेहि (Ṛv. X. 95.2).
   प्रोर्वशी तिरत दीर्घमायुः (Ṛv. X. 95.10).
   (For *urvasi*. also see V. 41.19; IV. 2.18; and X. 95.17).
8. **Arjuna** in the Ṛgveda :
   घोषेव शंसमर्जुनस्य नंशे (Ṛv. I. 122.5).
9. **Vasisthas** in the Ṛgveda :
   प्रावदिन्द्रो ब्रह्मणो वो वसिष्ठाः (Ṛv. VII. 33.3).
10. **Susruta** in the Ṛgveda :
    यः कर्मभिर्महद्भिः सुश्रुतो भूत् (Ṛv. III. 36.1).

(iii) A third element is the legendary and historic, the stories of old kings and *ṛsis*, given in the Brahmanas or later tradition in explanation of the obscure allusions of the Veda. Sayana's dealings with this element are marred by some hesitation. Often he accepts them as the right interpretation of the hymns; sometimes he gives an alternative sense with which he has evidently more intellectual sympathy, but wavers between the two authorities.

(iv) Ritualistic conceptions dominate over naturalistic interpretations. Not only are there the obvious or the traditional identifications, *indra*, the *maruts*, the triple *agni*, *surya*, *usa*, but we find *mitra* was identified with day, *varuna* with the night, *aryaman* and *bhaga* with the sun, the *ṛbhus* with its rays. We have here, as Aurobindo remarks, the seeds of that naturalistic theory of the Veda to which European learning has given so wide an extension. The old Indian scholars did not use the same freedom or the same systematic minuteness in their speculations. Still this element in Sayana's commentary is the true parent of the European Science of comparative mythology (*Aurobindo*, Vol. X. p. 20).

But here again, as Aurobindo remarks, it is the ritualistic conception that pervades; that is the persistent note in which all others lose themselves. In the formula of the philosophic schools the hymns, even while standing as a supreme authority for knowledge, are yet principally and fundamentally concerned with the *karmakanda* with works,–and by works was understood, pre-eminentaly, the

ritualistic observation of the Vedic Sacrifices. Sayana labours always in the light of this idea. Into this mould, he moulds the language of the Veda, turning the mass of its characteristic words into the ritualistic significances,—food, priest, giver, wealth, praise, prayer, rite, sacrifice.

Wealth and food;—for it is the most egoistic and materialistic objects that are proposed as the aims of the Sacrifice; possessions, strength, power, children, servants, gold, horses, cows, victory, the slaughter and the plunder of enemies, the destruction of rival and malevolent critic. As one reads and finds hymn after hymn interpreted in this sense, one begins to understand better the apparent inconsistency in the attitude of the Gita (or the Upanisads) which, regarding always the Veda as divine knowledge (Gita, XV.15), yet censures severely the champions of an exclusive Vedism (Gita, II.42),—all whose flowery teachings were devoted solely to material wealth, power and enjoyment.

It is, as Aurobindo observes, the final and authoritative binding of the Veda to this lowest of all its possible senses that has been the most unfortunate result of Sayana's commentry. The dominance of the ritualistic interpretation had already deprived India of the living use of its greatest Scripture and of the true clue to the entire sense of the *upanisads*. Sayana's commentary put a seal of finality on the old misunderstanding which could not be broken for many centuries. (*Aurobindo*, Vol. X. p. 20).

When Dayananda talks of *yajna, or karma,* he takes a wide view of life. The Vedic philosophy is a philosophy of plenty, of prosperity and liberality. To Dayananda, *yajna* is not only the sacrificial ritual, it embraces all the achievements on a social plane to ameliorate the conditions of our worldly living against poverty, miseries, sickness and disease, and in the subsequent stage to assure a better future beyond death even. It is not the ritual that would lead to that goal, it is the hard, honest and sincere devotion in all departments of knowledge,—science, technology, philosophy, and spirituality—that would assure the fruits of the *yajna.* The *para* and *apara vidyas* both have to be acquired to meet these ends. Dayananda finds in

the Vedas an inspiration for such a life, which strikes a balanced note between the material prosperity and spirituality, *vidya* and *avidya, jnana* and *karma, sambhuti* and *asambhuti, yoga* and *samkhya,* all taken as complimentary to serve the highest aspirations of our individual and also of the society. Dayananda and Aurobindo both have thus given new interpretation to the *karma-kanda,* and not the one belonging to the ritualistic period, and which had brought the divine Vedas to disrepute and ridicule.

Viniyoga on the Ritualistic Application of the Vedic Texts

It has been rightly pointed out by the Vedic scholars, Western and Indian, that between the actual composition of hymns (or the actual revelation of hymns), and the age of the commentators like Sakandasvami, Venkata Madhava or Sayana, or even between the revelation and the days of Nairuktas, grammarians and lexicographers, or even up to the time of the composition of the books like the Taittiriya Samhita (which is a book rather to be placed in the rank of the Brahmanas and Aranyakas], than may be regarded as an independent Veda—the Kṛsna Yajurveda), so many milleniums must have elapsed that neither the *brahmanas* or *aranyakas* nor the *nairuktas,* grammarians and the commentators and scholiasts can be regarded as the true interpreters of the texts; they, at the most, may be regarded as representing the notions of the times and the practices of the days, when they were present. In this sense, Sayana, Mahidhara and others are in no way the representatives of the very old traditions even. Sayana was born in fourteenth century A.D.; not to speak of the Rajasuya or the Asvamedha *yajnas,* even the *darsapaurnamas yajna* and the *somayaga* were obsolete in his times and very few rituals, which survived, also got so much mixed up with Pauranic gods and goddesses, that they could hardly be regarded as the representative of the Vedic traditions of milleniums B.C.

The objective of the Vedic revelation was manifold: to prescribe an eternal code of conduct for man; to show

to the man his relationships with his surroundings and with the Creator; to impress upon him the cause of his bondage and to indicate in the broadest terms the way to attain freedom from that bondage; to reveal to the man some of the mysteries of Nature as to give him a start for further exploration; to lead the bonded soul on the path of truth, enlightenment and immortality. All these points may be summed up into three words. *jnan*(enlightenment), *karma* (duty and action) and *upasana* (devotion, dedication and love towards God). Man has to be instructed in respect to all these three and hence was the necessity of a special type of revelation to him; he alone has been provided with a characteristic intelligence to explore into the mysteries of the Unknown of inner and external realms, provided he gets initial directions and subsequent encouragements.

Thus it had been the unique privilege of man that the *sruti* was revealed to him at the earliest history, and has been his guide throughout. Man held this *sruti* in his highest esteem, and had always regarded it as his privileged sacred lore.

By and by, man's culture grew, and his activities became multifarious. During the course of his social evolution, as a demand of his aesthetic sense, he developed rituals, formalities and ceremonies. These rituals were centered round certain dialogues, utterances, invocations, dramatizations, and performances of several types. The old seer was acquainted with the Vedic verses, and as his love knew no bounds for God and His Word, the *sruti*, he took out the passages from this Divine Text and associated them with rituals and ceremonies which he held so sacred. The rituals became doubly sacred on account of these associations. This is how the *viniyoga* of the verses in numerous *yajnas* started milleniums ago.

By *viniyoga* is meant the recitation of a verse or its part, taken from the Vedic Samhitas and some other similar texts, along with the operations accompanying rituals and ceremonies. It must be remembered that the texts existed before the currency of the ritual: the text was not composed to be utilized in the rituals;—it had its

sanctity even otherwise. But since the devotee had high regards for the texts and for the rituals both, he relevantly or even otherwise, got the two associated together. After a long and continuous usage of the text in the rituals, it was natural for people to have perpetuated this association to such an extent that one could not have thought of the text without its association with the rituals. Thus in the course of time we had, in a way, the *degradation* of the text. The deeper meanings of the texts were forgotten and their association with rituals only survived. This is why we say that Sayana, Mahidhara and other scholiasts in their commentaries do not give the true meanings of the texts. They merely depict the relation of the text with the ritual.

The *viniyogas* (ritualistic applications of the texts) are relevant and irrelevant both. Relevant ones are known to possess *rupa-samṛddhi*. This term has been defined in the Aitareya Brahmana as follows :

एतद् वै यज्ञस्य समृद्धं यद् रूपसमृद्धं यत् कर्म क्रियमाणं ऋगभिवदति ।

(Ait. Br. I. 1.4)

i.e. if one speaks out such a mantra, in which the operation to be performed in the sacred ritual is described verbally too, this is known as the relevancy of the text (its *rupa-samṛddhata*). They (the invitatory and offering verses) are *perfect in form* (*rupa-samṛddhata*), as being addressed to Agni and Visnu; that in the sacrifice is perfect, which is *perfect in form*, that rite which as it is performed the verse describes. (A.B. Keith's translation).

Unnecessarily, a great emphasis has been laid on this concept of relevancy or the *rupa-samṛddhata*; usually, it would be seen from the illustrations quoted in the Aitareya Brahmana itself; the relevancy is only *verbal* or *nominal*; on the basis of one or two words, occurring in the text, the relevancy is imposed on the verse without looking into the real purport of the text. This is why, the *viniyoga* has done more harm than actually any material good. Dayananda has been the first man in the history to have taken away the stigma or stink of the *viniyoga* from the natural

meanings of the texts. This has been his great contribution in the Vedic scholarship.

The *viniyoga* had given altogether a wrong impression about the prose and poetry of the Yajurveda text. This Veda has been rescued from the fetters of the *viniyoga* by Dayananda. The greater bulk of the Yajurveda, particularly from Chapter I to XVII, and several other chapters, had, it appears, no use other than of their recitation on the occasion of some of the elaborate ceremonials which developed around them, such as: *darsapaurnamasa yajna* (rituals associated with full moon and new moon), *agnihotra* (the fire-ritual), *agrayana-isti* (concerned with food), *daksayana yajna* (associated with Daksa Prajapati), *caturmasya yajna* (pertaining to the rainy season), *soma-yaga* (ritual connected with Soma plant), *vajapeya yajna* (*yajna* of the Brahmanas concerning food grains), *rajasuya* (a yajna of the *ksattriyas* concerning the glory of the State), *cayana nirupana* (details concerning funeral pyres), *asvamedha* and numerous others. The entire Satapatha Brahmana (barring the last upanisadic chapter, the Bṛhadaranyaka) deals with these details. Of course, occasionally, the Satapatha Brahmana also refers to the deeper mystical and philosophical spirit behind the parables and the rituals. The beautiful Sukta of Creation and of Social Order, the so-called the Purusa Sukta has been nicknamed as the Naramedha Chapter (rituals dealing with human sacrifice), when we come to the commentary of Mahidhara and Uvata. (Chapter XXXI).

Allusions to Mental and Supra-Mental Realm

Whilst Dayananda also referred to the mental and supra-mental realms, whilst commenting on various Vedic mantras in his commentaries and elsewhere, this subject as an exclusive specialization has been taken over by Aurobindo. He poses the problems thus: "Our first duty, therefore, is to determine whether there is, apart from figure and symbol, in the clear language of the hymns a sufficient kernel of paychological notions to justify us in supposing at all a higher than the barbarous and primitive

sense of the Veda. And afterwards, we have to find, as far as possible from the internal evidence of the Suktas themselves, the interpretation of each symbol and image and the right pychological function of each of the gods. A firm, and not a fluctuating sense, founded on good philological justification and fitting naturally into the context wherever it occurs, must be found for each of the fixed terms of the Veda." (*Aurobindo*, Vol. X.p. 32). After having given a serious thought to such problems, Aurobindo has formulated his "psychological theory" and has tried to explain the mystic reality behind such terms as *agni*, *varuna*, *mitra*, the *asvins*, the *maruts*, *indra*, the *visvedevas*, *sarasvati*, and her consorts, oceans and rivers, the Seven Rivers or the *sapta-sindhu*, the dawn, cow and *angiras*, the lost Sun and the lost cows, the *angirasa ṛsis*, the seven-headed thought, *svar* and *dasagvas*, *pitṛs*, the Hound of the Heaven, the Sons of Darkness, and *dasyus* and the conquest over them.

Aurobindo took to the comparative study of Dravidian languages and Sanskrit, and in this connection, he says, "It did not take long to see that the Vedic indications of a racial division between *aryans* and *dasyus* and the identification of the latter with the indigenous Indians were of a far flimsier character than I had supposed. But far more interesting to me was the discovery of a considerable body of profound pychological thought and experience lying neglected in these ancient hymns, and the importance of this element increased in my eyes when I found first, that the mantras of the Veda illuminated with a clear and exact light psychological experiences of my own for which I had found no sufficient explanation, either in European psychology or in the teachings of the Yoga or of the Vedanta, so far as I was acquainted with them, and secondly, that they shed light on obscure passages and ideas of the Upanisads to which, previously, I could attach no exact meaning and gave at the same time a new sense to much in the Puranas." (*Aurobindo*, Vol. X p. 37).

I shall not enter here into the details, which my readers could read in the original writings of Aurobindo (see The Secret of the Veda, Centenary Library Edition, Vol.

X, 1972). I shall be sastisfied with quoting a few of the psychological renderings arrived at by Aurobindo of the Vedic terms:

Term	*Psychological Sense*
Ṛtam, ऋतम्	Truth.
Dhi, धी	Thought or understanding.
Raye, राये	Spiritual felicity.
Vaja, वाज	Homogeneous totality of thought.
Yajna, यज्ञ	Action, internal or external, consecrated to gods.
Yajamana, यजमान	Soul or personality as doer.
Ghṛta, घृत	Thought or mind.
Indra, इन्द्र	Illuminated mentality.
Indra's two horses	Double energies of mentality.
Go (Cow), गो	Light, as a symbol of divine knowledge. Mental illumination.
Asva (horses), अश्व	Vital energy.
Go-Asva, गो-अश्व	Light-energy companionship.
Bhuh, भूः	Earth (*anna*).
Bhuvah, भुवः	Middle-region(*antariksha*) (*prana*).
Svah, स्वः	Heaven (*manas*).
Mahas, महस्	Vastness and Truth, (*vijnana*) (*satyam-ṛtam-bṛhat*).
Seven Worlds	Seven psychological principles—*sat, cit, ananda, vijnana, manas, prana, anna.*
Death(Mṛtyu, मृत्यु)	Mortal state of matter, with mind and life involved in it.
Immortality (Amṛta, अमृत)	State of infinite being, consciousness and bliss—*sat, cit-ananda.*
Rodasi (Heaven and Earth) रोदसी	Mind and Body.

In this context, Aurobindo further writes :

"The Vedic deities are names, powers, personalities of the Universal Godhead and they represent each some essential puissance of the Divine Being. They manifest the cosmos and are manifest in it.

Children of Light, Sons of the Infinite, they recognize in the soul of man their brother and ally and desire to help and increase him by themselves increasing in him so as to possess his world with their light, strength and beauty. The gods call man to a divine companionship and alliance; they attract and uplift him to their luminous fraternity, invite his aid and offer them against the Sons of Darkness and Division. Man in turn calls the gods to his sacrifice, offers to them his swiftness and his strengths, his clarities and his sweetnesses,—milk and butter of the shining cow, distilled juices of the Plant of Joy, the Horse of the Sacrifice, the cake and the wine, the grain for the God-Mind's radiant coursers. He received them into his being and their gifts into his life, increases them by the hymn and the wine and forms perfectly,—as a smith forges iron, says the Veda,—their great and luminous godheads." (*Hymns to the Mystic Fire*, Vol. XI. p. 30).

Whilst Dayananda's concept of the Vedic texts is very much the same as the concept of Aurobindo, yet there are essential differences too. Dayananda's concept leads to pure monotheism in which the Supreme Self may be addressed, recalled or invoked with various names according to His qualities, characteristics, functions and attributes. He is one, though known by various names. His names are not meaningless;—the etymology of the word directly appears to refer to the reason why God is known by that particular name. According to Aurobindo each deity represents "Some essential puissance of the same Divine Being." This concept of Aurobindo, whilst on one hand possesses the kernel of monotheism, it leads in subsequent steps to monistic, pantheistic and even polytheistic views of the cosmos. Whilst commenting on Dayananda's Vedic monotheism, Aurobindo writes, "Such a theory is, obviously, difficult to establish. The Ṛgveda itself, indeed asserts (Ṛv. I. 164.46) that the gods are only different names and expressions of one universal Being, who in His own reality transcends the universe; but from the *language of the hymns* we are compelled to perceive in the gods not only different names, but also different forms, powers and personalities of the one Deva. The monotheism of the Veda includes in itself also the monistic and even polytheistic views of the cosmos and is by no means the trenchent and simple creed of modern theism. It is only by a violent struggle with the text that we can force on it

a less complex aspect." (*Aurobindo*, Vol. x. p. 30).

It is difficult to comment on the two concepts of the Vedic gods, propounded by the two great masters of the soil, Dayananda and Aurobindo. Aurobindo treads on dangerous grounds, as much as his mysticism may lead to the worst kind of superstitions (of course, he takes a rational view), and may deteriorate into polytheistic pantheism. Aurobindo's symbolic mysticism is truly applicable to about a few thousands of the Vedic verses, with strenuous stretch of imagination: his interpretations answer to the needs of mental and supramental realms; Dayananda saw in the Vedic texts a wider application to the multipurposeful life; Dayananda's interpretations embrace in themselves the viewpoints of Aurobindo, and simultaneously provide a little beyond his realm too on both sides of the spectrum.

6

DIVINE LANGUAGE

Not only MAN, several of the animal species have also a community of their own, and the rigidity of the social pattern very much depends on the mode of expression, provided by Nature to them. Animals other than man dominatingly work through inherent inspirations, so often called *instincts*, but the man of today picks up things dominatingly through *instruction*. The language or the mode of expressions in the case of animals is instinctive; as if for each species there is a common inspired language, which every individual member of the species gets from the gracious Creator. According to the Vedic Theism, the first group of evolved men were graciously in possession of an Inspired Speech, and it had been the privilege of this MAN, characterized by the possession of specific *intellect* (of which the other species are almost deprived), that through the process of *instruction* and *evolution*, he could emerge out to the present day heights. A few amongst the first group of men were divinely inspired with Speech, (this is the Revealed Speech), and several amongst the rest of them, and also those of the subsequent generations picked up this Speech by instruction. The Speech since then underwent through numerous series of modifications. Perceptibly or imperceptibly, we are still passing through these phases.

There is an echo of the first divine utterance in the following lines of a Ṛgvedic verse :

बृहस्पते प्रथमं वाचो अग्रं
यत् प्रैरत नामधेयं दधानाः ।
यदेषां श्रेष्ठं यदिर प्रमासीत्
प्रेणा तदेषां निहितं गुहाविः ॥ (Ṛv. X. 71.1)

That, O Great Lord, the Creator, is the best of Speech which those giving a name (to objects) first utter; that which was the best of those (words) and

free from defect, (Sarasvati, the goddess of Knowledge) reveals it *though* secretly implanted, by means of affection. (Ṛv. X. 71. 1)

The First Group of men found themselves surrounded with strange things, which had no names till then. To these men, God gave the divine inspiration, the Vedas revealed; now in their turn, they hunted out for the appropriate *names*, and with ingenuity they ascribed names to the objects of surroundings. This may be regarded as one of the highest achievements of MAN in his entire history of valuable contributions. This must have been the first use of the divine revealed knowledge.

The revelation of the divine speech has been referred to in the following verse also :

यज्ञेन वाचः पदवीयमायन्
तामन्वविन्दन् नृषिषु प्रविष्टाम् ।
तामाभृत्या व्यदधुः पुरुत्रा
तां सप्त रेभा अभि सं नवन्ते ॥ (Ṛv. X. 71.3)

The First Speech was provided by Lord Himself, the one called as YAJNA (*=visnu=prajapati=creator*) in the hearts of *ṛsis* (the specially chosen Masters); having acquired it, they (the *ṛsis* or Masters) dispersed it to many places. The seven singers make her tones resound in concert.

The tradition further says, that the Divine Speech was given to man in the form of four Vedas, the Ṛk, the Yajuh, the Sama and the Atharva through four persons, the four *ṛsis*, who came to be known as Agni, Vayu, Aditya and Angiras. These four Vedas are non-man-made, and in this sense they are known as *apauruseya*,- they are beyond the authorship of a mortal man. We have a verse in the Yajurveda :

तस्माद् यज्ञात् सर्वंहुत ऋचः सामानि जज्ञिरे ।
छन्दांसि जज्ञिरे तस्मात् यजुस्तस्मादजायत ।। (Ṛv. X. 90.9)

From that great *yajna* (=Visnu=Prajapati=Creator), Ṛks and Sama hymns were born; from the

same were born the Chandas or the hymns of the Atharva; the Yajuh had its birth from it.

The same verse occurs in the Ṛgveda too (X. 90. 9). There is a similar verse in the Atharvaveda also :

यस्माद् ऋचो अपातक्षन् यजुर्यस्मादपाकषन् ।
सामानि यस्य लोमान्यथर्वाङ्गिरसो मुखं
स्कम्भं तं ब्रूहि कतमः स्विदेव सः ॥ (Av. X. 7.20)

From whom they fashioned off the Ṛk verses, from whom they scraped off the mantras of Yajuh, of whom the chants of the Samaveda are the hairs and the hymns of the Atharvaveda (Atharvans and Angirases) the mouth—that *skambha* (the Divine Originator) tell me : which forsooth is He?

The Divine Speech has been regarded as *nitya* or eternal, lasting for all times, for we have in the Ṛgveda "*vaca virupa nityaya*". (Ṛv. VIII. 75. 6)

All the ancient authorities in India have been acknowledging the revealed nature of the Vedic Texts, its being eternal and non-man-made or *apauruseya*. Manu says that having taken out terms from the Divine Speech, names were ascribed to all objects and actions.

सर्वेषां तु नामानि कर्माणि च पृथक् पृथक् ।
वेदशब्देभ्य एवादौ पृथक् संस्थाश्च निर्ममे ॥ (Manu, I. 21)

The Mahabharata also corroborates the same :

ऋषीणां नामधेयानि याश्च वेदेषु सृष्टयः ।
नानां रूपं च भूतानां कर्मणां च प्रवर्तनम् ॥
वेद शब्देभ्य एवादौ निर्मिमीते स ईश्वरः ।
शर्वर्यन्ते सुजातानामन्येभ्यो विदधात्यजः ॥

(Santi-parva,Chap. 232. 25-26)

We have similar passages elsewhere too in the Mahabharata. In the Satapatha Brahmana, it has been clearly said that the Vedas, Ṛk, Sama and the Atharva (or Atharvangiras) have been breathed out (i.e. revealed)

by the Creator in the most natural form (XIV. 5. 4. 10). The names of the *ṛsis* (seers or Great Masters) bearing the torch of this Divine Knowledge came to be known as Agni, Vayu, Aditya and Atharvangiras : Ṛk through Agni, Yajuh through Vayu, Sama through Aditya and the Atharva through Angiras.

The Atharvaveda speaks of Veda—the Mother, with affection and reverence (XIX. 70.1) :

> स्तुता मया वरदा वेदमाता प्रचोदयन्तां पावमानी द्विजानाम् ।
> आयुः प्राणं प्रजां पशुं कीर्तिं द्रविणं ब्रह्मवर्चसम् ।
> मह्यं दत्त्वा व्रजत ब्रह्मलोकम् ॥ (Av. XIX. 71.1)
>
> Praised by me is the boon-giving Veda-Mother. Let them urge on the Devotional Hymn of the Twice-born. May I attain thereby the life-span, the vitality, progeny, cattle, fame, property, the splendour of knowledge; may you proceed to the World of Knowledge.

REVERENTIAL ATTITUDE OF UPANISADS AND SYSTEMS OF PHILOSOPHY

The Vedas are held in high esteem in all systems of Aryan Philosophy from the earliest times. Our systems of philosophy are based on the inspired teachings of the *upanisads*, which themselves regard the revealed Vedas as their source of knowledge. Whenever one speaks of *svadhyaya* or study, and *pravacana*, the teaching, it always refers to the study and teaching of the Veda (Taittiriya Up. 1. 9). All the *vedangas*, *upangas* and the treatises on the *upavedas** are meant to explore the mysteries of the Vedas and to elucidate, expound and elaborate the Knowledge imparted through the Vedic Revelation. The

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*The *vedangas* constitute six subjects : *siksa* (orthography), *vyakarana* (grammar), *nirukta* (etymology), *chanda* (prosody), *jyotis* (astronomy), and *kalpa* (rituals); the *upangas* are the six systems of Indian philosophy : the Vaisesika, the Nyaya, the Samkhya, the Yoga, Purva Mimamsa, and the Uttara Mimamsa; the *upavedas* are the treatises on the sciences of (i) medicine, (ii) aesthetics, (iii) military and defence, and (iv) wealth and property.

Vedas are known as the *sruti*; the *sruti*, however, is different from a *sastra;* the *sruti* is like a seed and the *sastra* is like a fully evolved plant. Seed contains the plant, but to see the details of the plant in its seed would be a grave mistake. The *sastra* is the systematized knowledge, based on the *sruti*, having evolved out of it,—as if each *sastra* deals with a specified or specialized facet of knowledge, but the *sruti* is an integral whole. Both the *sruti* and the *sastra* deal with physical and metaphysical realms of the Creation in which *man* is the central figure. The *sruti*, the *sastra* and the *smṛti* (ethical, moral and legal codes) all the three are primarily concerned with man alone, and no other species, unless it affects the relation of that species with man.

In the Kena Upanisad, whilst dealing with the mystic doctrine of Brahman, it has been said:

> Austerity (*tapas*), restraint (*dama*) and work (*karman*) are the foundations of it. The Vedas are all its limbs. Truth (*satya*) is its abode. He, verily, who knows it (i. e. the mystic doctrine) thus, striking off evil becomes established in the most excellent, endless, heavenly world—yea, he becomes established ! (Kena, 33-34).

In the Mundaka Upanisad, the entire expanse of knowledge has been classified under two heads: *apara* and *para*; the *apara* includes the study of the Vedas and the Vedangas :

> Of these, the *apara* is the Ṛgveda, the Yajurveda, the Samaveda, the Atharvaveda, orthography or pronunciation (*siksa*), ritual (*kalpa*), grammar (*vyakarana*), prosody or metrics (*chandas*) and astronomy (*jyotisa*). Now the *para* or the highest is that whereby that Imperishable (*aksara*) Brahman is known.
>
> (Mund. Up.)

The Maitri Upanisad having described the miserable condition of the bonded individual soul, describes an antidote thus :

> The antidote, assuredly, indeed, for this elemental soul (*bhutatman*) is this: study of the knowledge of the Veda, and pursuit of one's regular due. (Maitri Up. IV. 4. 3)

The Veda or the eternal Divine Knowledge is one. The revealed word of God has come to us in three forms: (i) the Ṛk or the hymns pertaining to knowledge. (ii) the Yajuh, outlining the details of actions (*yajna*) and duties of man in life, (iii) the Saman, the devotional songs. Each of the Vedic Samhitas (the Ṛk, the Yajuh, the Sama, and the Atharva) have the verses or prose consisting of all the three topics, *jnana*, the knowledge, *karma*, the field of action, and lastly *upasana*. The Bṛhadaranyaka Upanisad describes the creation of this *trayi vidya* (the threefold knowledge) thus :

> The Lord bethought of Himself: "Verily, if I shall intend against him, I shall make the less food for myself." With that speech, with that self He brought forth this whole world, whatsoever exists here: the Hymns (*ṛk*. i.e., the Ṛgveda), the Formulas (*yajus*, i.e., the Yajurveda), the chants (*saman*, i.e., the Samaveda), metres, sacrifices (*yajnas*), men and cattle. (Bṛ. Up. I. 2.6).

The Chandogya Upanisad mystically speaks of the *udgitha*, (the syllable OM used in the Vedic chants) thus :

> *Ud* is the Samaveda; *gi* is the Yajurveda; *tha* is the Ṛgveda. (Ch. Up. I. 3.7)

implying that the mystical syllable Udgitha or OM (A-U-M) embraces in itself the entire divine knowledge, the threefold one or the *trayi vidya*. It has been further said in the same Upanisad :

> Death saw them there, in the *ṛk*, in the *saman*, in the *yajus*, just as one might see a fish in water. When they found this out, there arose out of the

> *ṛk*, out of the *saman*, out of the *yajus*, and took refuge in sound. Verily, when one finishes an *ṛk*, he sounds out OM, similarly a *saman;* similarly a *yajus*. This sound is that syllable (*aksara* with a double meaning : a syllable and imperishable). He who pronounces the syllable, knowing it thus, takes refuge in that syllable, in the immortal, fearless sound. Since the gods became immortal by taking refuge in it, therefore, he becomes immortal. (Ch. Up. I. 4.3-5).

The Chandogya Upanisad sometimes speaks of a pentad (five-fold) of knowledge :

> Now, this person who is seen within the eye is the hymn (*ṛk*), is the chant (*saman*), is the recitation (*uktha*), is the sacrificial formula (*yajus*) and is the prayer (*brahman*).

> The threefold Veda has been collected with two other triads :

> Prajapati brooded upon the worlds. As they were being brooded upon, he extracted their essences :

> Agni (literally meaning fire also) was extracted out from the earth, Vayu, (or wind) from the inter-space or atmosphere, and Aditya (or the Sun) from *dyau* or celestial space.

> Upon these three deities he brooded. As they were being brooded upon, he extracted their essences. From Agni, came forth the Ṛk verses; from Vayu, came forth the Yajus prose; and from Aditya came forth the Saman chants.

> Upon the threefold knowledge he brooded. As it was being brooded upon, he extracted its essences: *bhur* from the Ṛk verses, *bhuvas* from the Yajus prose, and *svar* from the Saman chants. (Ch. Up. IV. 17.1-3)

The Taittiriya Upanisad has transformed the above *triad* into a tetrad; and thus this Upanisad has accommodated the fourth one also,—the Atharva-veda, also known as the Brahma-veda. With the three *mahavyahṛtis*, or the Supreme Symbols, *bhur*, *bhuvah* and *svar*, a fourth one, the *mahas* has been appended at the suggestion of an ancient seer Mahacamasya:

> *Bhur*, verily, is the Ṛk verses; *bhuvas* the Saman chants; *svar* the Yajus prose; *mahas* sacred knowledge or the Brahma verses (the Atharva). (Tai. Up. I. 5.1).

The Collateral Tetrads described by the Upanisad are as follows :

Bhur	Bhuvas	Svar	Mahas
Pṛthivi (this world)	Antariksa (atmosphere)	Dyuloka (yonder world)	Aditya (the Sun)
Agni (fire)	Vayu (wind)	Aditya (sun)	Candrama (moon)
Ṛk	Saman	Yajuh	Brahma (Atharva)
Prana	Apana	Vyana	Anna (food)

In the Kausitaki Upanisad, the three Vedas have been described as constituting three limbs of a personified Cosmic Lord :

> Having Yajus as his belly, having Saman as his head,
> Having the Ṛk as his form, yonder Imperishable,
> 'Is Brahman !' Thus he is to be discerned—
> The great seer, consisting of the Sacred Word (*brahma-maya*). (Kau. Up. I. 7).

As regards the Vedic triad, we have the following inspiring lines in the Mundaka Upanisad also:

> The works which the sages saw in the sacred sayings (the Vedic hymns),

Are manifoldly spread forth in the triad (of the Vedas).
Follow them constantly, ye lovers of truth.
This is your path to the world of good deeds.
(Mund. Up. I. 2.1)

The Mundaka Upanisad in its opening lines speaks thus of the traditions through which the sacred knowledge, first given to man as the revealed one, passed through several generations :

Brahma arose as the first of the gods—
The maker of all, the protector of the world.
He told the knowledge of the Supreme, the *foundation* of all knowledge,
To Atharvan, his eldest son.
What Brahma taught to Atharvan
Even that knowledge of Brahma, Atharvan told in ancient time to Angir,
He told it to Bharadvaja Satyavaha,
Bharadvaja to Angiras—both the higher and the lower knowledge. (Mund. Up. I. 1.1).

Of course, this geneology has not much of historical significance. The same Upanisad again describes the source of all religious rites as follows :

From him (the supreme Self), the Ṛg verses, the Saman Chant, the Sacrificial Formulas (*yajus*), the initiation rite (*diksa*),
And all the sạcrifices, ceremonies and sacrificial gifts (*daksina*),
The year too and the sacrificer, the worlds
Where the moon (Soma) shines brightly, and where the Sun. (Mund. Up. II. 1.6)

How the Cosmic Vitality, the Cosmic Life, is related to the Vedas would be seen from the passage fro.n the Prasna Upanisad :

> Like the spokes on the hub of a wheel,
> Everything is established on Life (*prana*);
> The Ṛk verses, the Yajus prose and the Saman chants,
> The sacrifices, the nobility and the priesthood.
> (Prasna. II. 6)

The same Upanisad, again in its own characteristic way refers to the triad of the Vedas whilst dealing with the subject of partial or complete comprehension of the most august syllable A-U-M (i.e. OM). It so begins :

> To him then he said: "Verily, O Satyakama, that which is the syllable OM is both the higher (the unqualified or *nirguna*) and the lower (the qualified or *saguna*) Brahman. (cf. *para* and *apara* knowledge of the Mundaka Upanisad). Therefore with this support, in truth, a knower reaches one or the other.
>
> If he meditates on one element (namely, *A*), having been instructed by that alone he quickly comes into the earth (after death). The Ṛk verse leads him to the world of men. There, united with austerity, chastity and faith, he experiences greatness.
>
> Now, if he is united in mind with two elements (namely.A+U), he is led by the Yajus prose to the intermediate space, to the world of the moon. Having experienced greatness in the world of the moon, he returns hither again.
>
> Again, he who meditates on the highest person (*purusa*) with the three elements of the syllable OM (namely A+U+M) is united with brilliance (*tejas*) in the Sun. As a snake is freed from its skin, even so, verily, is he freed from sin. He is led by the Saman chants to the world of Brahman. (Prasna. V.1—5)

And the Upanisad finally summarizes it in a verse

of four lines thus :

> With the Ṛk verses, to this world; with the Saman chants, to the intermediate space;
> With the Yajus formulas, to that which sages recognize;
> With the syllable OM is truth as support, the knower reaches That
> Which is peaceful, unaging, immortal, fearless and supreme. (Prasna V.7)

The Upaṇisads fall in tune with that literature of which the Vedas are the fountain-head. (The Brahmanas and the Aranyakas expound and elaborate the contents of the Vedic Samhitas and the Upanisads constitute the metaphysical phase of this entire literature). In this connection the following lines of the Svetasvatara are of great significance :

> That which is hidden in the secret of the Vedas, even the Mystic Doctrines (Upanisad)—
> Brahma knows that as the source of the *sacred word* (Brahman),
> The gods and seers of old who knew That,
> They, (coming to be) of Its nature, verily, have become immortal. (Sv. Up.)

And thus, the older Upanisads (the major ones) are religious and philosophical treatises of the early Vedic literature. The Upanisads are meant to elaborate and elucidate the mysteries of life indicated in the Vedic Texts in the subtle form.

VEDA AND THE SYSTEMS OF INDIAN PHILOSOPHY

The entire Aryan literature of Ancient India not only shows a reverential attitude towards the Vedas, it regards it as the Supreme Authority. Whatever is in the *sruti* is the supreme authority; it is the *self-luminous light* which needs no other light to establish its validity or identity; it

is known as the Absolute Authority or the *svatah pramana* (स्वत: प्रमाण), or the self-evident testimony. Other literatures come under the category of the *paratah pramana* (परत: प्रमाण), that is, they are held in esteem and authority, inasmuch as they are in conformity with the Vedic tenets and do not disagree with or do not oppose all that has been said in the Vedas. This literature receives light from the Vedas.

The Vedas being the earliest revealed knowledge are regarded as *eternal*, that is, the truths expounded in them are valid for all times, for all ages and for all places. They are universal. The science or philosophy deals with those truths which are *universal;* it has been the cherished ideal of human sciences also to discover such universal *truths*, and if possible, then to reduce them to *one* universal truth. God is truth personified; He reveals Himself in and through His Creation; He has revealed Himself through His eternal *WORD* also. *WORD* has been God; *word* has ever been with God. The Vedas constitute a fraction of His *divine word.* The Vedas constitute a *seed* of knowledge, which is ever present in the highly evolved plant in the sense that the entire plant is present in the seed. The entire present day knowledge is the evolved manifestation of the same seed; it has come out of the seed; it is sustained by the seed, and in one sense, it cannot go out of the seed.

Through His divine knowledge to the earliest group of men, God has been our first and foremost teacher. The author of the Yoga Sutras, the great seer Patanjali, has expressed this sentiment in the following words :

> (This Lord) is the Greatest Teacher of even the earliest great ones, because unconditioned by time.
> (Yoga. I. 26)

Any concept of Theism would not be worthwhile, in which God is merely a Creator or a Ruler, but who is not our First Teacher and who is not the source of knowledge. The Vedanta Sutras of Vyasa accept the glory of that Brahman (ब्रह्म) alone who is the Creator of the Universe, who alone is its sustainer and so forth, and who having

revealed the Vedas, is the acknowledged Source of Knowledge :

> *Sastra yonitvat*, शास्त्रयोनित्वात्, (having been the Source of Knowledge; i.e. the Source of the Veda).
>
> (Ved. Su. I.1.3)

Kanada, the author of the Vaisesika, clearly says that the Vedas are to be regarded as of supreme authority, since they are the revealed WORD of God (तद् वचनादाम्नायस्य प्रामाण्यम्) (I.1.3). The word "*amnaya*" is another synonym of Veda.

Gotama, the author of the Nyaya Sutras, and Vatsyayana, the commentator on these Sutras accept the supreme authority of the Vedas; just as in the field of physical, biological and medical sciences, things become authoritative, when they are demonstrable and are based on sound experiences, in the same way, the Vedas are taken as authoritative :

> मन्त्रायुर्वेदप्रामाण्यवच्च तत्प्रामाण्यमाप्तप्रामाण्यात् । (Nya. Su. II.1.67)

that is, like the experiences of medical sciences etc., they are authoritative, and also because all the *apta* (reliable and authoritative) persons have been speaking of their supreme authority. Commenting on this sutra, Vatsyayana and Dayananda both have said that :

> All men should acknowledge the authoritativeness of the Vedas which are eternal and are the word of God, because all the great Yogins, and all the ancient sages like Brahma and others who were righteous, free from deceit, treachery and other similar defects, merciful, preachers of truth, and masters of learning have admitted the authority of the Vedas to be of the same nature as that of the Mantra and the Ayurveda. (Ṛgbhabhu)

By *mantra* is meant the 'findings of all true sciences'. There has never been a mention of the authorship of the Vedas. All the known authors, so far available in history of our traditions, have unhesitatingly and irrevocably acknowledged the non-personal authorship of these Vedas. Thus on the undisputed testimony of the authoritative

persons, it can be said that the Vedas are the supreme authority.

Kapila, the author of the Samkhya, clearly says that the Vedas have not been composed by any human being, because nobody in traditions and history ever saw their author :

न पौरुषेयत्वं तत्कर्त्तुः पुरुषस्याभावात् । (Sa. Su. V. 46).

Ballantyne (J.R.) translates this aphorism as follows :

> They (the Vedas) are not the work of (supreme) man; because there is no such thing as the (supreme) man (whom you allude to as being, possibly) their maker.

Many of us have been of the opinion that the system of the Samkhya does not acknowledge the identity of God as the First Cause of the Universe; even such persons never accuse the Samkhya as not accepting the infallibility of the Vedas. A critic says : Since the Vedas were uttered by Primal Man, they must have been the composition or the work of that man; on this, the reply of the Samkhya is as follows :

यस्मिन्नदृष्टेऽपि कृतबुद्धिरुपजायते तत् पौरुषेयम् ।

> That (alone) is Man's work, in respect of which, even be it something invisible, an effort of understanding takes place. (Sa. Su. V. 50)

Commenting on this sutra, Ballantyne (based on the commentaries of Aniruddha, Mahadeva and others) writes :

> That it has been remarked that a thing is not Man's work (*pauruseya*) merely through its having been uttered by Man; for no one speaks of the respiration during profound sleep as being Man's work (or voluntary act). But what need to speak of antecedence of understanding ? The Vedas, just like an

expiration, proceed of themselves, from the Self-existent, through the force of *adṛsta* (अदृष्ट, fate or some invisible agency), wholly unpreceded by thought. Therefore, they are not (a Supreme) Man's work (that is, they are not *pauruseya*).

The author of the Samkhya further says :

निजशक्त्यभिव्यक्तेः स्वतः प्रामाण्यम् । (Sa. Su. V. 51)
They are, spontaneously, conveyers of right knowledge, from the patentness of their own power (to instruct rightly).

Thus according to the Samkhya, just as it is beyond the human capacity to create the universe, just as the man in sound sleep is not responsible for his expirations, similarly, no human being could have produced the Vedas; they have come out of their ownselves, and they have spontaneously become the conveyers of the right knowledge. They are *apauruseya* (non-man-made), and they differ from other literature produced by men.

Jaimini, the author of the Purva-Mimamsa accepts the supreme authority of the Veda. He very comprehensively elaborates the science of interpretation of the Vedic Texts. What the Vedanta Sutras are to the Upanisads, the Purva-Mimamsa sutras are to the Veda. After having discussed out the theme of infallibility of the Vedic Texts, Jaimini discusses the eternal nature of WORD (the Veda) :

नित्यस्तु स्याद् दर्शनस्य परार्थत्वात् ।
It (the WORD) is surely eternal because it is manifested for the sake of others. (Mi. Su. I. 1.18)

Words are of two kinds, Vedic and Laukika (the words of the Vedas are the *vedic*); henceafter, the words coined through human agency are *laukika*. Both the words are meant to be understood by persons other than the speaker, and therefore, they should continue to exist after the moment they have been spoken. In this sense,

they do not die out; therefore, they must be eternal. If the man-made-word could be eternal, much more so would be the words given to us through divine sources.

This type of argument has been examined and discussed in details by Indian grammarians like Panini and Paṭanjali. Of course, this type of treatment has no direct bearing on the question of the infallibility and eternal nature of the Vedas.

Panini and Patanjali on the Eternality of the Vedas, of Words and of the Relations of Meaning with the Word.

Panini and other Indian grammarians and linguists have always delighted in discussing a few problems which may not be of interest to a general reader or an academician of any other language. These questions are :

(i) Is sound (*sabda*) eternal (*nitya*) or subject to annihilation (*anitya*) ? When we utter a sound, is it merely a manifestation of what was existing already or it is altogether a new entity ?

(ii) Word is a collection of sounds. It is meant to convey a sense to others. Within the interval, the word is spoken and heard by different people, does it continue to exist ? Is it destroyed as soon as comprehended by others ?

(iii) Is there a natural relation between word (*sabda*) and the sense or meaning (*artha*) it carries; or is the relation arbitrary and empirical ?

(iv) Is the revealed Word eternal ? If so in what sense ? In the Vedic Samhitas, (the present day available collection of texts) the words are found in a certain sequence with proper accents. Is this sequence eternal ? Is the sequence eternal along with the accents and other details ?

These are some of the fundamental questions raised and discussed by Patanjali whilst commenting on the Panini Sutras :

छन्दो ब्राह्मणानि च तद् विषयाणि । (Ast. IV.2 65).
तेन प्रोक्तम् । (Ast.IV.3.101).

We shall not enter into the details of discussion. It appears that Patanjali, the great commentator, is of the view that in the case of *amnaya*, not only the sequence (*anupurvi*, आनुपूर्वी) is eternal or fixed, (*nitya* or *niyata*) the accents are also eternal and fixed. In each Creation, the Vedas are revealed in the same words, arranged in the same sequence with the same accents :

स्वरो नियत आम्नायेऽस्य वामशब्दस्य ।
वर्णानुपूर्वी खल्वप्याम्नाये नियतास्य वामशब्दस्य ।

(Mahabhasya, V. 2.59)

But in the case of Branches (*sakhas*) like the Katha, the Kalapa, Paippalada and so on, the sequence is *anitya* or non-eternal; the sense or meaning (*artha*), in their case is also eternal :

यद्यप्यर्थो नित्यः यात्वसौ वर्णानुपूर्वी साऽनित्या ।
तद् भेदाच्चैतद् भवति काठकं कालापकं मौदकं पैप्पलादकमिति ।

(Mahabhasya, IV. 3.101)

Of course, the authorities have been differing amongst themselves on many of these points. But on one point, they have all agreed, that is, on the revealed nature of the Vedas in the most natural form, through a most natural proce s in the earliest history of the highly developed human species.

7

AGNI, MITRA, VARUNA AND INDRA

AGNI

It would be seen from the survey of the entire Ṛgveda that the six of the ten books are given each to the hymns of a single *ṛsi* or the family of the *ṛsis*. The hymns of the Second Book are associated with Ṛsi Gṛtsamada, of the Third and the Seventh Books with Visvamitra and Vasistha respectively, of the Sixth with Bharadvaja and of the Fifth with Atri and his family. In each of these books the hymns with the *devata* Agni are first collected together, and then followed by those of which Indra is the *devata*. At the close of the books we have hymns of which the *devata* or subject title is Brhaspati, Surya, Ṛbhus, Usa etc. Of course, the entire Ninth Book is devoted to Soma Pavamana. The First, Eighth and Tenth Books are associated with numerous *devatas* and *ṛsis*. Here too Agni hymns are leading, followed by Indra and others. The *samhitikarana* of the Ṛgveda (the editing of the collection) is thus based on a well-conceived homogeneous structure.

The first word of the Rgveda is *agni*. The hymn (I. 1) clearly explains what this *agni* stands for. Oldenberg has translated the first verse as follows :

> अग्निमीळे पुरोहितं यज्ञस्य देवमृत्विजम् ।
> होतारं रत्नधातमम् ॥ (Ṛv. I. 1.1)
>
> I magnify *agni*, the *purohita*, the divine ministrant of the sacrifice, the *hotṛ* priest, the greatest bestower of treasures.
>
> [I|adore the Flame, the vicar, the divine Ṛtvik of the sacrifice, the summoner, who most founds the ecstasy. *Aurobindo*, Vol. XII. p. 39].

Oldenberg, whilst translating this verse had in his mind the entire fire ceremony in which traditionally the

terms *agni*, *purohita*, *ṛtvik* and *hotṛ* had assumed definite technical meaning.

What this *agni* actually is would be clear from the four verses (I. 1. 5—8) of the same hymn (translation of Oldenberg).

5. अग्निर्होता कविक्रतुः सत्यश्चित्रश्रवस्तमः ।
देवो देवेभिरागमत् ॥

May Agni the thoughtful *hotṛ*, he who is true, and most splendidly renowned, may the god come hither with gods.

6. यदङ्ग दाशुषे त्वमग्ने भद्रं करिष्यसि ।
तवेत् तत् सत्यमङ्गिरः ॥

Whatever good thou wilt do to thy worshipper, O Agni, that (work) verily is thine, O Angiras.

7. उप त्वाग्ने दिवे दिवे दोषावस्तर्धिया वयम् ।
नमो भरन्त एमसि ॥

Thee, O Agni, we approach day by day, O (god) who shinest in the darkness; with our prayer, bringing adoration to thee—

8. राजन्तमध्वराणां गोपामृतस्य दीदिवम् ।
वर्धमानं स्वे दमे ॥

Who are the king of all worship, the guardian of *ṛta*, the shining one, increasing in thine own house.

I have given Oldenberg's translation. Wilson, and Griffith's translations, almost based on Sayana's interpretation are very much the same. For example, Wilson translates the verse 5 as follows :

> May Agni, the presenter of oblation, the attainer of knowledge, he who is true, renowned and divine, come hither with the gods.

All these renderings have a stigma and stink of ritualistic tradition, whilst the verses have a deeper meaning. Aurobindo has brought forward a "psycholgical sense"

from these verses :

> May Agni, the priest of the offering, whose will towards action is that of the seer, who is true, most rich in varied inspiration, come, a god with the gods. (5)
>
> The good that thou wilt create for the giver, that is that truth of thee, O Angiras. (6)
>
> To thee, day by day, O Agni, in night and in the light, we by the thought come bearing our submission. (7)
>
> To thee who shinest out from the sacrifices (or, who governest the sacrifices) of the Truth, and its illumination, increasing in thy own home. (8)
>
> (*Aurobindo*, Vol. X. p. 59)

It must be remembered that the words *ṛtam* and *satyam* may sometimes appear to be synonymous, but often, particularly when they come together or in close proximity, they have distinctive associations also. In phrases like *satyam ṛtam bṛhat*, both of them have precise distinctive significance (the *truth*, the *right*, the *vast*). In the Veda, Upanisads and the Vedanta this truth (*satya*) is a path leading to felicity, leading to immortality; it is again that by the path of the truth, a sage, *ṛsi* or seer (a *kavi*, a *vipra*) passes beyond; he passes out of falsehood, out of the mortal state into an immortal existence.

नमो ब्रह्मणे नमस्ते वायो त्वमेव प्रत्यक्षं ब्रह्मासि, त्वामेव
प्रत्यक्षं ब्रह्म वदिष्यामि, ऋतं वदिष्यामि, सत्यं वदिष्यामि ।

O Lord supreme, my homage to you: O *vayu*, my homage to you; you evidently are the *brahma* (vast); I shall ever call you as the evident *brahma* (vast), I shall ever call you as the evident *ṛta* (right) and as the evident *satya* (truth).

According to Aurobindo, when we speak of truth, we are speaking truth of *divine essence,* not truth of mortal sensation and appearance. It is *satyam*, truth of being (*sat*), it is in its action *ṛtam*, right, truth of divine being regulating right activity both of mind and body; it is *bṛhat*, the universal truth proceeding direct and under-

formed out of the infinite. The consciousness that corresponds to it is also infinite, *bṛhat*, large as opposed to the consciousness of the sense-mind, which is founded upon limitation. The one is described in the Upanisad as the *bhuma*, or large and plenty, the other as *alpa*, small, or the little. The supramental or Truth-consciousness is also known as *mahas*. In respect to this, we have the faculties, such as *dṛsti*, *sruti* and *viveka*, the direct vision of the truth, the direct hearing of its word, the direct discrimination of the right, and *ṛsi*, sage or seer possesses these faculties.

Now what is *agni* in the Veda? He is the *foremost force;* He is the *foremost light;* and therefore, He is the *foremost adorable.*

Dayananda derives the word *agni* from the roots अञ्चु, अग, अगि and इण् (√*ancu*, √*aga*, √*agi* and √*in*).

Ancu, gati-pujanayoh (अञ्चु गतिपूजनयोः) which means to *act* or to *go*, and to *adore*. Act or *gati* is of three types – to know, to go and to attain. The supreme Lord, the highest consciousness is all-knowledge, omniscient, the only worth knowing and attaining, and the only foremost adorable, and therefore, in the Veda, such foremost adorable, attainable, omniscient Lord is known as Agni. The Nirukta, almost in the same sense, describes Agni as अग्रणीर्भवति (*agranirbhavati*), the one who always is in forefront, or who is the foremost and the first to be invoked in the sacred acts; अग्रं यज्ञेषु प्रणीयते (Nir. VII. 14).

This *foremost adorable* (Agni) has been variously described in the Vedic Texts. He is known as *jatavedas*, or knower of all births, विश्वानि वयुनानि विद्वान्, it knows all our actions, or it knows all manifestations or phenomena, or it possesses all forms and activities of the divine wisdom. Agni is the divine power in men, the energy of fulfilment through which they do their work in Him. It is again this work which is symbolized by the *yajna* or sacrifice.

Agni, in the same sense, may also be taken as the divine will perfectly inspired by divine wisdom; it is again the active or effective power of the *truth-consciousness* (*kavikratuh*); Agni is *saty*: true in His being; perfect possession of His own truth, and the essential truth of

things gives Him the power to apply it properly in all acts and movements of force. The numerous verses of the Veda associate Him, Agni, with various, perfectly significant aspects and attributes, *hotṛ*, *citravastamah*; *duta* and he is the supreme divine power accompanied with lesser divine powers : देवो देवेभिः ।

Agni is accompanied with *mayas*, felicity, *bhadra* and *suvita* (blessings, and righteousness) as opposed to *durita*, *duhkha*, or *durguna* (evils, discomforts, misfortunes, and misdeeds).

It must always be remembered that it is imagery of the Veda, which describes the sacrifice (all noble acts done with non-attachment, without the expectation of rewards and for the general good) as travelling towards the gods, and man himself as a traveller moving towards the truth (*satyam*), the light (*jyotih*) and the felicity (*amṛtam*). In that sense, the truth, the vast and Agni's own Home (*swam damam*, स्वं दमं, I. 75.5; *sve dame*, स्वे दमे, I. 1. 8) are identical.

Since Agni is *agrani* (अग्रणी), the foremost leader, according to Dayananda, it on the mundane and social plane represents a leader (honest and sincere in dealings) of any group, society, social or state organization, even of an army; but this leader should be an intellectual person, adherent to truth and benevolence; *suryavat sarvartha prakasaka* (सूर्यवत् सर्वार्थप्रकाशकः), shining like the sun, and giving enlightenment (Ṛv. II.1.4) and *vahniriva vartamana*, (वह्निरिव वर्तमान) existing like fire (Ṛv. II. 1.5)— (*Dayananda*).

VARUNA AND MITRA

The Veda, at the highest level, stands for the concept of a supramental consciousness which leads the devotee to immortality and beatitude, but at lower levels, it wishes the individual to get the first hand acquaintance with the ever-changing dynamic world in which the soul has been placed in an ever-changing and highly complex corporeal system of five sheaths—the eternal one, nourished and sustained by food, the *annamaya* (अन्नमय), followed by the second one, of the vital breaths or the *pranamaya*

(प्राणमय), and then the third one, the psychic sheath of numerous mental behaviours, the *manomaya* (मनोमय); so far are the three material sheaths, evolved out of the causal primordial Prakṛti; and then we have two further sheaths, the one of the knowledge or supramental or transcendental understanding, the *vijnanamaya* (विज्ञानमय), and the fifth and the last of bliss or beatitude or the transcendental happiness, the *anandamaya* (आनन्दमय).

In the First Book of the Ṛgveda, we have a reference in the first hymn to *agni*, the foremost adorable, which is associated with truth in being (*satya*), truth in activity (*ṛta*) and truth in universality (*bṛhat*). In the second hymn, we have a reference to two equally significant words *varuna* and *mitra*. They are also associated with *ṛta*. Let us take the following last three verses of this hymn, as translated by Wilson :

> 7. मित्रं हुवे पूतदक्षं वरुणं च रिशादसम् ।
> धियं घृताचीं साधन्ता ॥
>
> I invoke *mitra* of pure vigour, and *varuna* the devourer of food; the joint accomplishers of the act bestowing water (on the earth).
>
> 8. ऋतेन मित्रावरुणा वृता वृधावतस्पृशा । क्रतुं बृहन्तमाशाथे ।
> *Mitra* and *varuna*, augmenters of water, dispensers of water, you connect this perfect rite with its true award.
>
> 9. कवी नो मित्रावरुणा तुविजाता उरुक्षया ।
> दक्षं दधाते अपसम् ॥
>
> Sapient *mitra* and *varuna*, prosper our sacrifice and increase our strength : you are born for the benifit of many; you are the refuge of multitudes.

It is needless to comment on Wilson's renderings. With Mitra and Varuna, we have the association of *dhiyam ghṛtacim* which should be translated as perfecting the bright understanding; in it, we have the concept of purified discernment. We have to correlate this verse with the following in which we have the terms *kavi*, *kratu*, *ṛtavrdha*, *ṛtasprsa*, *bṛhantam* etc. as in the first hymn of the Ṛgveda

ṛtavṛdha and *ṛtaspṛsa* mean much more than augmenters and dispensers of water.

Now we shall try to see what interpretations could be given to the term *agni*, *mitra*, and *varuna* when all the three occur as a *triple* or a *triad* in plural number; when these terms occur in pairs of two (as dyads) in dual number and when they occur *singly* in singular number. And again, we have further to see what these triads, dyads, and singles mean on the ephimeral materialistic plane, what on the mental or supramental plane, what on the cosmogonic plane, what on the social plane, and what on the transcendental plane. The Vedic hymns are multipurpose hymns in their essential nature, since they are *apauruseya* (अपौरुषेय), i.e. not composed by a human individual. Sometimes, in one and the same hymn, one is first instructed with the ephimeral and materialistic aspect, and then in subsequent verses in the same hymn, he is elevated, step by step, through stages up to the highest transcendental knowledge.

On the material plane, *agni* may be the simple fire produced by attrition, then subsequently it may mean the solar heat and light; then it may be universalized with the cosmic energy, and in the psychic realm, it may be the guiding intelligence, and finally, in the transcendental stage, it may be the divine light of spirituality or it may be the most adorable Lord Himself. On the social plane, *agni* may be a leader of the society, an instructor of an institution and so on. Exactly the same may be said of the words like *vayu*, *indra*, *mitra* and *varuna*. The adjectives and other qualifying phrases in the verse would indicate to an interpreter the rationale of multiple meanings.

The word *varuna* has been derived by Dayananda from two roots *vṛn* (वृञ्) *varane*, to choose, to select, and *vara* (वर) *ipsayam* : यः सर्वान् शिष्टान् मुमुक्षून् धर्मात्मनो वृणोति स वरुणः i.e. the one who selects out, chooses and thus favours them only who are virtuous and deserving to follow the path leading to freedom from bondage is *varuna*.

Alternatively, यः शिष्टैर्मुमुक्षुभिर्व्रियते वर्य्यते वा स वरुणः i.e. the one who is chosen or selected for dedication, worship and adoption by the virtuous and spiritual persons, is *varuna*.

He alone is worth having, worth possession, and thus He alone is supermost, and therefore, the most venerable Lord is *varuna.* In a number of Vedic verses, He is addressed as *raja varuna,* the supreme ruler *varuna.*

According to Aurobindo, *agni, indra, varuna* and *mitra* are the four gods (or faculties) who represent the working of the Truth in the human mind and temperament. *Mitra,* according to the Vedic text is *putadaksa* (पूतदक्ष), possessed of a purified judgment; *varuna* is *risadas* (रिशादस्), the destroyer of hurters or enemies (the obstacles). There are two obstacles which prevent the intellect from being a perfect and luminous mirror of truth-consciousness; first, impurity of discernment or discriminative faculty which leads to the confusion of the truth; secondly, the many causes or influences which interfere with the growth of the truth by limiting its full application or by breaking up the connections and harmony of the thoughts that express it, and which thus bring about poverty and falsification of its contents. (*Aurobindo,* Vol. X. p. 71). These hostile agencies, in the Vedic terminology, are known as *vṛtra, dasyu, ahi,* etc, which we shall take up later on. In this context, *varuna* is *risadas,* destroyer of enemy, of all that seek to injure the growth.

Mitra, then a power like *varuna* of light and truth, especially represents love, joy and harmony, the foundations of *mayas* (मयस्), the Vedic beatitude.

Dayananda has derived the word *mitra* from the root *nimida* (ञिमिदा), *snehane,* to love or to show affection, with a *pratyaya* or particle *ktra* (क्त्र) added to it : मेद्यति स्निह्यति स्निह्यते वा स मित्रः i.e. the one who loves and shows affection is *mitra.* God is the supreme friend of ours and therefore, He is *mitra.*

The Nirukta (X. 21) gives other derivations : मित्रः प्रमीतेः त्रायते, संमिन्वानो द्रवतीति वा, मेदयतेर्वा, i.e. *mitra* is so called because he preserves from destruction (*pramites trayate*), or because he runs (*dravati*), measuring things together (√*mi*) or the word is derived from the causal of the verb *mid* (to be fat).

(ii) *Minvano dravati,* from root √ *mivi, secane* (मिवि सेचने), to impregnate, and from *dru* (द्रु) to *move,* to go, i.e.

mitra is one who impregnates whilst moving, and in this sense, *mitra* is also the sun or the cloud. There are other possible derivations : (i) माति परिमापयति इति मित्रम्, the one who measures out the entire universe, is *mitra*; (ii) मितं कर्मफलं राति ददातीति मित्र:, the one who awards the fruits of action judiciously is *mitra*.

How our supreme Lord is *mitra* is seen from the following verse :

> मित्रो जनान् यातयति ब्रुवाणो
> मित्रो दाधार पृथिवीमुत द्याम् ।
> मित्र: कृष्टीरनिमिषाभि चष्टे
> मित्राय हव्यं घृतवज्जुहोत ॥ (Ṛv. III. 59.1)

Mitra-Varuna Dyad—The first hymn to *mitra-varuna* (मित्रावरुण) is Ṛv. V. 62. The goal of journey of the manifested sun of divine knowledge is eternal and immutable truth. God is one, but in Him unite all divine virtues; the objective of all sacrifices is to unite all the wealth of being and knowledge (*sat* and *cit*), and power and bliss (*ananda*) in the supreme. *Varuna* is associated with all that is vast and pure (infinity and purity), *mitra* is associated with all that is shining (light) and harmony. The impeller of the cosmic movement and journey pours out knowledge in us, the milk of the herds, by the dawns of the inner light, and there descend the streams of immortal existence followed by the single and perfect movement of *mitra-varuna*, the *light* and the *purity*; the *harmony* and the *infinity*. It is the rain of heaven which, as if these two God-heads, the divine powers, pour down, upholding the physical existence in its fruits and the celestial in its herding radiances of illumination. Thus they create in man a force full of divine knowledge and a wide being which they guard and increase, a strewn seat for the sacrifice. This thosand pillared force of knowledge they make a home for themselves and dwell there in the revelations of the word. It is a home full and large with the sweatness and ecstasy of the supreme and inviolable peace and bliss.

In this context, one can go through the nine verses of Ṛv. V. 62. I shall quote here Aurobindo's literal translation of a few of them (Vol. X. p. 466).

1. ऋतेन ऋतमपिहितं ध्रुवं वां
   सूर्यस्य यत्र विमुचन्त्यश्वान् ।
   दश शता सह तस्थुस्तदेकं
   देवानां श्रेष्ठं वपुषामपश्यम् ॥

By the *truth* is veiled that ever-standing *truth* of yours, where they unyoke the horses of the Sun: there the ten hundreds stand still together; That One,—I have beheld the greatest of the embodied gods.

2. तत् सु वां मित्रावरुणा महित्वमीर्मा
   तस्थुषीरहभिर्दुदुह्रे ।
   विश्वाः पिन्वथः स्वसरस्य धेना
   अनु वामेकः पविरा ववर्त ॥

That is the utter vastness of you, O Mitra and Varuna, there the Lord of the movement milks the herds of his stable radiances by the days. Lo, your twain swell all the streams of the Blissful One and your one wheel moves in their path.

3. अधारयतं पृथिवीमुत द्यां
   मित्रराजाना वरुणा महोभिः ।
   वर्धयतमोषधीः पिन्वतं गा
   अव वृष्टिं सृजतं जीरदानू ॥

You uphold earth and heaven, O Mitra king and king Varuna, by your greatnesses; you increase the growths of earth; you nourish the shining herds of heaven; you pour forth the rain of its waters, O swift in strength.

8. हिरण्यरूपमुषसो व्युष्टा वयः
   स्थूणमुदिता सूर्यस्य ।
   आ रोहथो वरुण मित्र गर्त—
   मतश्चक्षाथे अदितिं दितिं च ॥

To that home whose form is of the gold, whose pillars are of the iron, in the breaking of the Dawn, in the uprising of the Sun, you ascend, O Varuna, O Mitra, and thence you behold the *infinite* and the *finite*.

The inherent idea of the term of *varuna* is *infinity* and *purity* and of *mitra* is light and harmony. Dayanand interprets *mitra* as *pranavat suhṛt* (प्राणवत् सुहृत्; life-like friendly,

dear as life, and harmonious), and *varuna* as *varah sresthah* (वरः श्रेष्ठः), the superb and pure. (Ṛv. II. 1.4)

INDRA

Dayananda derives the word *indra* from the √*idi*, (इदि) *paramaisvarye*, to become one possessed with highest glory ; य इन्दति परमैश्वर्यवान् भवति स इन्द्रः परमैश्वर्यः; our supreme Lord is Indra, since none else possesses that glory which He possesses.

The Nirukta of Yaska (X.8) gives about 13 etymologies of the word *indra*, of which the following eight are of his own, and the rest five belong to other authorities :

(i) इरां दृणातीति—(इरा+दृ) (*ira+dṛ*)
(ii) इरां ददातीति—(इरा+दा) (*ira+da*)
(iii) इरां दधातीति—(इरा+धा) (*ira+dha*)
(iv) इरां दारयत इति—(इरा+दारय) (*ira+daraya*)
(v) इरां धारयत इति—(इरा+धारय) (*ira+dharaya*)
(vi) इन्दवे द्रवतीति—(इन्दु+द्रु) (*indu+dru*)
(vii) इन्दौ रमतीति—(इन्दु+रम्) (*indu+ram*)
(viii) इन्धे भूतानीति—(√इन्ध्) (√*indh*)

According to Agrayana इदं करणात्, i.e. the Lord is Indra since He does the most.

According to Aupamanyava, इदं दर्शनात् (*idam+dṛs*), our Lord is Indra, since He is greatest seer. The word is also derived from √इन्द्, √*ind*, meaning to be powerful, i.e. being powerful he tears the enemies asunder or puts them to flight. (इन्दते वैश्वर्यकर्मणः। इन्द्रञ्छत्रूणां दारयिता वा; द्रावयिता वा); or he honours the sacrificers (आदरयिता च यज्वनाम्) and for the same reason, the infinitesimal soul* in body is also *indra*, the seer, (Ait. Br. III. 13).

There is a ritualistic etymology of the word Indra : (*indan*) *adarayịta ca yajvanam*, i.e. the one who honours and respects the performers of sacrifices. For the word Indra, see the verse :

इन्द्रो दिव इन्द्र ईशे पृथिव्या इन्द्रो अपामिन्द्र इत् पर्वतानाम् ।
इन्द्रो वृधामिन्द्र इन्मेधिराणामिन्द्रः क्षेमे योगे हव्य इन्द्रः ॥ (Ṛv. X.89.10)

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*इन्द्रियं इन्द्रलिंगं, इन्द्रदृष्टं, इन्द्रसृष्टं, इन्द्रजुष्टं, इन्द्रदत्तमिति वा (Asta. V. 2.93).

Let us now discuss *indra* a little more in details. Indra is sometimes described as the eldest of the *maruts* (We shall discuss *maruts* later on)—इन्द्रज्येष्ठो मरुद्गणः; Indra is often associated with *vayu* (wind-god, as if) who is the master of life, inspirer of that breath or dynamic energy, called the *prana*, which is represented in man by the vital and nervous activities. Everything about *agni, maruts, vayu* and *indra* is lustrous—*maruts* (and *indra*) have shining weapons, golden ornaments and resplendent cars. Not only do they send down the rains, the waters, the abundance of heaven and break down the things least established to make way for new movements and new formations—functions which, for the rest, they share withothers, *mitra* and *varuna*, but like them they also are friends of Truth, creators of Light. In their connection it has been said, "Conceal the concealing darkness, repel every devourer, create the Light for which we long" (Ṛv. I.86.9—10). And further, in their context it has been said, "They carry with them the sweetness (*ananda*) as their eternal offspring, and play out their play brilliant in the activities of knowledge." (I. 166. 2). The *maruts*, therefore, are the energies of mentality, energies which make for knowledge. Theirs is not the *settled* truth, the diffused light, but the movement, the search, the lightning flash, and when Truth is found, the many-sided play of its separate illuminations. (*Aurobindo*). Indra is closely related to such *maruts*; they are Indra's brothers. The hymn I. 171 relates to *indra* and *maruts*.

In the hymn I. 170, there is a colloquy of *indra* and *agastya*. We have given its translation in the text; Aurobindo translates (Vol. X. p. 241) this colloquy as follows (the five verses) :

INDRA—It is not now, nor is it tomorrow; who knoweth that which is supreme and wonderful. It has motion and action in the consciousness of another, but when It is approached by the thought, It vanishes.

AGASTYA—Why dost thou seek to smite us, O *indra*? The *maruts* are thy brothers. By them accomplish perfection; slay us not in our struggle.

INDRA—Why, O my brother *agastya,* art thou my friend, yet setest thy thoughts beyond me? For well do I know how to us thou willest not give thy mind. Let them make ready the altar, let them set Agni in blaze in front. It is there, the awakening of the consciousness to immortality. Let us two extend for thee thy effective sacrifice.

AGASTYA—O Lord of substance over all substances of being, thou art the master in force ! O Lord of love over the powers of love, thou art the strongest to hold in status ! Do thou, O *indra* agree with the *maruts,* thou enjoy the offerings in the ordered method of the Truth.

It is a wonderful colloquy, which establishes a relation between *maruts, indra, agastya* and *truth* and its attainment. It would easily be seen that *agastya* is not the mythological seer; he is the infinitesimal soul in each of us; *indra* is the supreme Lord and *maruts* are the vital forces, the *pranas,* in our body complex, and the entire colloquy has deeper meanings.

Agastya accepts the will of the God and submits. According to *indra, agastya* is his friend and brother and Agastya finally agrees to perceive and fulfil the Supreme in the activities of Indra. From his own realm, Indra is supreme Lord over the substances of being (*sat*) as manifested through the triple world of mind, life and body, and has, therefore, power to dispose of the formations towards the fulfilment, in the movement of Nature, of the divine truth that expresses itself in the universe,—supreme Lord over love and delight manifested in the same triple world, and has, therefore, power to fix those formations harmoniously in the status of Nature. *Agastya* gives up all that is realized in him, in the fixed parts of *agastya's* consciousness and directed in the motional towards fresh formations. Indra is once more to enter into friendly parley with the upward aspiring powers of *agastya's* being and to establish agreement between the seer's thoughts and the illumination that comes to us through the pure intelligence.

That power will then enjoy in *agastya* the offerings of the sacrifice according to the right order of things as formulated and governed by the truth which is beyond. (*Aurobindo*, Vol. X. p. 244).

Indra is so often associated with *soma* which is synonymous with the divine *ananda*; it is the principle of Bliss from which the very existence of man, this being with triple complex of physical, life-ful and mental realms is drawn. It is born of the sense-mind, in the Universal *purusa* (Ait. Up. III.2); it is sometimes identified with moon for this reason. Its sensation is an attempt to translate the secret delight of existence into the terms of physical consciousness, often figured as *adri*, the hill, the stone, or dense substance (*a+dri*), divine light and divine delight, are both of them concealed and confined, and have to be released or extracted. *Ananda* is retained as *rasa*, the sap, the essence, in sense objects and sense-experiences, in the plants and growths of the earth-nature, and among these growths. Soma plant symbolizes that element behind all sense-activities and their enjoyments which yield the divine essence (*Aurobindo*, Vol. X. p. 249).

Soma is the sun in its enlightenment; it is also moon in its beauty, charm and enjoyment; it is an elixir of life, being so exhilarating; it is a healing balm for all mental and supramental ills and injuries, and therefore, it has been symbolized by a *conceptual plant*, not one belonging to our biological flora, which though never existed, was always equated with a medicinal plant of hypnotic and exhilarating properties, the number of leaves of which increases or decreases with the waxing and waning of the moon. The medicinal characteristics of all the herbs *conceptually* depend, as if, on the *soma* content in them. In the rituals, different medicinal plants of the localities have been used under the title of Soma in Soma-sacrifices. Soma is the transcendental state, and in the Yogic Samadhi is a synonym of Divine Bliss.

Indra is known to be *satakratu* (शतक्रतु), the one of hundred actions or activities. Dayananda translates the term *satakratu* as *asamkhya-prajnam* (असंख्यप्रज्ञं, बहुकर्माणं वा)

(II. 16. 8; 22. 4), the one of infinite discriminating or truthful intellect, or of numberless actions. God alone is *satakratu* in the sense that His actions are cent per cent detached, whilst in human actions, one can be detached to a small percentage; if we strive, we may be *pancakratu* or *dasakratu*, with five or ten per cent detached actions. Our actions are based on the expectation of fruits; they leave lingerings after the performance. But Indra, the supreme Lord, alone is *satakratu*. The Yoga Sutras define this Lord, the Supreme Purusa, in these words : The Supreme Lord is an extra-ordinary spirit unaffected by afflictions, actions, fruitions and dispositions.

Indra is the slayer of *vṛtra*, the coverer. When Indra symbolizes the Sun, the coverer are the clouds. When Indra is the self, the coverer is ignorance, nescience, but Indra protects rich mind in its riches.

> अस्य पीत्वा शतक्रतो घनो वृत्राणामभवः ।
> प्रावो वाजेषु वाजिनम् । (Ṛv. I. 4.8)
> (When hadst drunk of this, O the one of hundred activities, thou becomest a slayer of the coverers and protect the rich mind in its riches—*Aurobindo*).
>
> Compare Aurobindo's translation with Wilson's :
>
> Having drunk, Sátakratu, of this (Soma juice), thou becomest the slayer of the *vrtras*; thou defendest the warrior in battle.

Kratu is *karma*, act, but unattached; it is simultaneously wisdom and *prajna*, knowledge too. This knowledge can come to him only who has drunk the divine elixir, the *soma*, the exhilarating bliss, not the mundane wine or an alcoholic or drug preparation. It is enlightening, giver of divine wisdom and a balm for mental perturbations.

Indra smites *vṛtra*, the coverer, the *evil*, the *serpent* or *ahi* the nescience with his *vajra* or the thunderbolt. This *vajra* is the adamantine justice, the firm determination to smite against untruth, the evil of evils, the most

ferocious demon. *Vṛtra* is the shroud of thick darkness of ignorance which covers *truth* and the discriminating faculty of the lower self, the soul.

Indra in smiting *vṛtra* takes the help of *maruts.* The *maruts* represent the progressive illumination of human mentality, until from the first obscure movements of mind which only just emerge out of the darkness of the subconscient, they are transformed into an image of the luminous consciousness of which *indra* is the *puruṣa*, the representative being. (*Aurobindo*).

The *maruts*, reinforced in strength will always need the guidance and protection of the superior power. In Aurobindo's terminology (Vol. X. p. 262) the *maruts* are the *puruṣas* of the separate thought-energies, whilst *indra*, the *one puruṣa* of all thought-energy. In *indra, maruts* find their fullness and their harmony.

Let there then be no longer strife and disagreement between this whole and these parts. The *maruts*, accepting Indra, will receive from him the right perception of the things that have to be known. They will not be misled by the brilliance of a partial light or carried too far by the absorption of a limited energy. They will be able to sustain the action of *indra* as he puts forth his force against all that may yet stand between the soul and its consummation.

8

THE ASVINS AND VISVEDEVAS

In the third hymn of Book I of the Ṛgveda, we have 12 verses, three of which are devoted to *asvins* (अश्विनौ), three to Indra, three to *visvedevas* (विश्वेदेवाः), and three to Sarasvati (सरस्वती). Traditionally, Asvins (twins, *asvinau*, in dual number) are regarded to be two sons of the Sun, begotten during his metamorphosis as a horse (*asva*), endowed with perpetual youth and beauty, and physician (also expert surgeons) of the gods; they are the heroes of many legends; they are the subject of enumeration in hymns I. 116 and 117. अश्विनौ देवानां भिषजौ, इति श्रुतेः —the two *asvins* are the physicians of the gods, such is the Vedic tradition (*Sayana*).

The three main interests of human soul are : (i) thought and its final victorious illuminations, (ii) action and its last supreme all-achieving puissances, and (iii) enjoyment and its highest spiritual ecstasies. Our last object is not the sense-enjoyment; this has to be replaced by Soma satisfying the innermost realm of human complex with divine *ananda*. For this purpose our thought-actions have to be divinized first. A triple-sacrifice has to be performed : the *cow*, the *horse* and the *soma* elixir are the figures of this triple sacrifice. The two *asvins* are to be invoked for this purpose :

1. अश्विना यज्वरीरिषो द्रवत्पाणी शुभस्पती ।
   पुरा भुजा चनस्यतम् ।
2. अश्विना पुरुदंससा नराशवीरया धिया ।
   धिष्ण्या वनतं गिरः ।
3. दस्रा युवाकवः सुता नासत्या वृक्तबर्हिषः ।
   आ यातं रुद्रवर्तनी । (Ṛv. I.3.1-3)

1. Asvins, cherisher of pious acts long-armed, accept with outstretched hands the sacrificial viands.

2. Asvins, abounding in mighty acts, guides (of devotion), endowed with fortitude, listen with unaverted minds to our praises.
3. Asvins, destroyers of foes, exempt from untruth, leaders in the van of heroes, come to the mixed libations sprinkled on the lopped sacred grass. (*Wilson*).

The three epithets of *asvins* in these verses are *dravat pani* (द्रवत् पाणि), *subhaspati* (शुभस्पति) and *purubhuja* (पुरुभुज). *Purubhuja* (also V.73.1) is not long-armed, it is "much enjoying" ; *subha* like *ratna* or *candra* stands for light and enjoyment. Asvins are riders on horse; this horse, *asva*, is symbolic of force, life-energy, nervous force or *prana* (प्राण). *Asvins*, again, are gods of enjoyment, seekers of honey; they are the physicians, they bring back youth to the old, health to the sick, and the wholeness to the maimed. In movements, they are swift, violent and irresistible, their chariot is so well-known for swiftness. They are like birds in swiftness : अश्विना हरिणाविव गौराविवानु यवसम् । हंसाविव पततमा सुतां उप ॥ (Ṛv. V. 78.2) like the mind; like the wind : मनोजवा अश्विना वातरंहा; (Ṛv. V. 77.3). They bring in their chariot ripe or perfected satisfactions to man, and they are creators of bliss, *mayas* (तमश्विनो रवसा नूतनेन मयोभुवा सुप्रणीती गमेम ; Ṛv. V.77.5).

All these characteristics indicate that the Asvins are twin divine powers whose special function is to perfect the nervous or vital being in man (*pranamaya kosa*) in the sense of action and enjoyment. And simultaneously, they are powers of Truth, of intelligent action, of right enjoyment; they are powers that appear with the Dawn; effective powers of action born out of the ocean of being, who because they are divines are able to mentalize securely the felicities of the higher existence by a thought faculty which finds or comes to know that true substance and true wealth. (*Aurobindo*, Vol.X.p.78). For we have in the Vedic Texts :

या दस्रा सिन्धुमातरा मनोतरा रयीणाम् ।
धिया देवा वसुविदा ॥ (Ṛv. I. 46.2)

Who are divine, of pleasing appearance, children of the sea, willing dispensers of wealth, and granters of dwellings, (in recompense of) pious acts. (*Wilson*).

They are givers of that impelling energy for the great work which, having for its nature and substance the light of the truth, carries man beyond the darkness. We have translated the hymns I. 46 and 47, which would show the nature of these Asvins, which carry man to their ship, to the other shore beyond the thoughts and states of the human mind, आ नो नावा मतीनां यातं पाराय गन्तवे (Ṛv.I.46.7), to the supramental consciousness. Surya (सूर्या), the daughter of the Sun, mounts their car as their bride.

In I.47.2, we have : त्रिवन्धुरेण त्रिवृता सुपेशसा रथेन यातमश्विना । That is, "Come *asvins* with your three-columned triangular car", and then in I. 47.4, we have : त्रिषधस्थे बर्हिषि विश्ववेदसा मध्वा यज्ञं मिमिक्षतम् । i.e., "Omniscient (*visvavedasa*) Asvins, stationed on the thrice-heaped sacred grass, sprinkle the sacrifice with the sacred juice". In their cars, these Asvins bring to us riches from the firmament or the sky beyond,—such riches which most of us covet (I.47.6). Evidently these riches are from the innermost realm of our life-complex, from the region of the *vijnanamaya* (विज्ञानमय) and the *anandamaya* (आनन्दमय) *kosas*.

Nasatya and Asvins—When we talk about Asvins, we refer to *vayu* (वायु) who supplies the vital forces, brings his steeds of life; here he calls the Asvins who use the vital forces, ride on the steed. The Asvins like gods descend from the truth-consciousness, the *ṛtam* (ऋतं); they are born and manifested, from Heaven, from *dyau*, the pure mind, the mental realm; their movement pervades all the worlds, —the mental, the vital and the physical (*manomaya, pranamaya* and *annamaya*),—the effect of their action ranges from the body through the vital being and the thought to the superconscient truth too. It commences indeed from the ocean, from the *vague of the being* as it emerges out of the subconscient and they conduct the soul over the flood of these waters and prevent its foundering on its voyage. They are, therefore, Nasatya (नासत्या), lords of the move-

ment, leaders of the journey or voyage.*

These Asvins help man with the truth which comes to them, especially by association with the Dawn, with *surya* (सूर्य), Lord of Truth, and with *surya* (सूर्या), his daughter, but they help him move characteristically with the *delight of being* (*sat*). They are lords of bliss, *subhaspati* (शुभस्पति); their car or movement is loaded with the satisfactions of the delight of being in all its planes, they bear the skin *dṛti* (दृति), full of the overflowing of honey: (दृति वहेथे मधुमन्तमश्विना, IV. 45.3); they seek the honey, the sweetness, and fill all things with it. They, as Aurobindo says, are, therefore, effective powers of the *ananda*, which proceeds out of the truth-consciousness (*sat-cit*), and which maintains man in his journey. They are specially riders or drivers of *horse*, *asvins*, as their name indicates,—they use the vitality of the human being as the motive force of the journey: but also they work in the thought and lead it to the truth. They give health, beauty, and wholeness to the body; they are the divine physicians.

I shall quote here only two verses from the Ṛgveda IV. 45.

> मध्व: पिबतं मधुपेभिरासभि सत प्रियं मधुने युञ्जाथां रथम् ।
> आ वर्तनिं मधुना जिन्वथस्पथो दृतिं वहेथे मधुमन्तमश्विना ॥ (3)
> Drink of the honey with your honey drinking mouths, for the honey yoke your car beloved, with honey you gladden the movements and its paths; full of honey, O Asvins, is the skin that you bear.
>
> (*Aurobindo*)

> प्र वामवोचमश्विना धियं धा रथ: स्वश्वो अजरो यो अस्ति ।
> येन सद्य: परि रजांसि याथो हविष्मन्तं तुरणिं भोजमच्छ ॥ (7)
> I have declared, O Asvins, holding the thought in me, your car that is undecaying and drawn by perfect steeds,—your car by which you move at once over all

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**Nasatya* (नासत्या) may be patronymic; grammarians derive it from *na* + *asatya* (न + असत्य) = true = not false. Aurobindo derives it from *nas* (नस्), to move: Nasatya are *asvins*, since they are described as "swift-footed", "fierce-moving in their paths" etc.

the worlds towards the enjoyment rich in offerings that makes through to the goal.

(*Aurobindo*, Vol. X. p. 314).

Asvins, Sarama and Panis—In the wideshinings of the Dawn, these Asvins rise; for *dawn* is the illumination of the truth rising upon the mentality to bring the day of full consciousness into the darkness or half-lit night of our being. She comes as Daksina (दक्षिणा), the pure intuitive discernment on which Agni, the God-force, in us feeds when he aspires towards the Truth or as Sarama, the discovering intuition, who penetrates into the cave of the subconscient where the niggard lords of sense-action (Panis, पणयः) have hidden the radiant herds (cows) of the Sun and gives information to Indra, the self. Then comes the lord of luminous Mind and breaks open the cave and drives upward the herds, *udajat* (उदाजत्), upwards towards the vast truth-consciousness, the own home of the gods. Our conscious existence is a hill (*adri*, अद्रि) with many successive levels and elevations, *sanuni* (सानूनि); the cave of the subconscient is below; we climb upwards towards the godhead of the Truth and Bliss where are the seats of Immortality, यत्रामृतास आसते (Ṛv. IX. 15.2). (*Aurobindo*, Vol. X. p. 319)

This is how, one can penetrate into the mystery, with which are associated Asvins, Indra, Sarama, Panis, cows, the hill, the cave, the allegory of stolen cows by Panis, and their search.

Whilst commenting on 1.89.3, Wilson says in his notes, that *asvins* are so termed either from having horses (*asvavantau*) or from pervading all things, the one with *moisture*, the other with *light*. According to Yaska, who also states the question: who are they? which is thus answered; according to some, (i) they are heaven and earth, (ii) to others day and night, (iii) according to others, the sun and moon; and (iv) according to traditionalists (*aitihasikas*, ऐतिहासिक), they were two virtuous princes (Nir. 12.1). Dayanand interprets Asvins differently at different places according to the relevant context; for example in II. 31.4, Asvins are *suryacandramasau*, सूर्यचन्द्रमसौ (the sun and moon); the word "*asvinau*" is

followed by *pati, palayitaram* (पालयितारं, the two protectors), a word which is translated as the "two husbands" (of Surya). In interpreting II. 39.7 Dayananda interprets Asvinau as wind and fire (*vayu* and *agni*); again in II.39.8, to him, *asvinau* denotes a pair of leaders, acquainted with wide knowledge अश्विनौ नरौ—सकल विद्याव्यापिनौ नेतारौ; again in II. 41.7, we have the word *asvina* along with *nasatya* and *asva-vat*, and *gomat*; here the word *asvina* has been translated as *vyapana-silau*, (व्यापनशीलौ), the two widely-present, and he interprets the term as "teacher-preacher" pair : of course *nasatya* is a pair free from *untruth*; and probably he hints at another pair of "air-fire-driven space craft (वायु-अग्नि यान). *Asvinau* is also a pair of *prana* and *apana* (the in-breath and out-breath, प्राणापानौ).

VISVEDEVAH

The word *visvedevah* (विश्वेदेवाः) is of common occurence in the Vedic Texts, literally meaning "all devas", usually translated as "all-gods". I would rather put it as "*all Nature's bounties*", because the word "god" has in it a stink of polytheism.

The hymn I. 3 has three verses 7-9 associated with *visvedevah*; Wilson and Aurobindo translate them as follows :

> ओमासश्चर्षणीधृतो विश्वेदेवास आगत ।
> दाश्वांसो दाशुषः सुतम् ॥ (7)
> Universal Gods, protectors and supporters of men, bestowers (of rewards), come to the libation of the worshipper.
> (O fosterers who uphold the doer in his work, O all gods, come and divide the soma-wine that I distribute.—*Aurobindo*).

> विश्वेदेवासो अप्तुरः सुतमागन्त तूर्णयः ।
> उस्रा इव स्वसराणि ॥ (8)
> May the swift-moving universal Gods, the shedders of rain, come to the libation, as the solar rays come diligently to the days.

(O all-gods, who bring over to us the Waters, come passing through to my soma-offerings, as illumined powers to your places of bliss.—*Aurobindo*).

विश्वेदेवासो अस्त्रिध एहिमायासो अद्रुहः । मेधं जुषन्त वह्नयः ॥ (9)
May the universal Gods, who are exempt from decay, omniscient (*ehimayasah*)*, devoid of malice, and bearers of (riches), accept the sacrifice.
(O all-gods, you who are not assailed, nor come to hurt, free-moving in your forms of knowledge, cleave to my sacrifice as its upbearers.—*Aurobindo*).

These Nature's bounties appear to constitute a class, but not enumerated; nowhere in the Vedic Texts are we given the details of these divinities. Perhaps some of the Nature's bounties are specified in terms of *agni, vayu, varuna, surya* (*aditya*), *mitra* etc., but others still *left un-enumerated* are covered under the title *visvedevah*, since our environmental bounties are hundreds in number. In the famous *santi-mantra* (Yv. XXXVI. 17), *dyau, antariksa, pṛthivi, apah, osadhayah, vanaspatayah*, having been enumerated, we have the term "*visvedevah*" which stands for the entire rest, not covered so for in the list. Dayananda translates the term as *sarve divya guna yuktah* (सर्वे दिव्यगुण-युक्ताः), i.e. all the persons or illuminating (or full of wisdom) attributes (II. 3.4). In the hymn II. 41, we have the devatas as *indra, vayu, mitra, varuna, asvinau, sarasvati, dyava-pṛthivi* (Heaven and Earth), and in the midst of this galaxy, we have *visvedevah* too (II. 41.13), where this term is translated by Dayananda as "*sarve vidvansah*", all learneds. When the verses are to be interpreted at the level of society, Dayananda's interpretation is very appropriate; and again when interpreted at other levels, the all-gods represent all mental and supramental faculties, and at the cosmic level, all Nature's bounties.

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* *Ehi*, एहि—come; *ma yasih*, मा यासीः—do not go away, and hence free-moving in your forms, as given by Aurobindo. *Sarvatah prapta-prajnah*, सर्वतः प्राप्तप्रज्ञः, or सर्वतो प्राप्तप्रज्ञाः, who have obtained knowledge universally—*Sayana*.

9

SARASVATI, ILA, BHARATI and MAHI

Sarasvati, without the least doubt is the Divine Speech (Ait. Br. II. 24; III. 1, 2); she is plainly and clearly, the Goddess of Word, if we speak in terms of symbolism. It speaks of the Supreme Lord also; amongst His various names, one name would be Sarasvati, since as Dayananda says, who else could be the Highest Supreme associated with the revealed knowledge? Our Lord has manifested Himself in His creation and in His word as knowledge personified.

The word "*sarasvati*" is derived from the root *sṛ*, *gatau* (√सृ, गतौ) or to move; deriving from this root, one has *saras* (सरस्), which with the particles *matup* (मतुप्) and *nip*. (ङीप्) gives the word *sarasvati*. *Saro* or *saras* means knowledge, or transcendental science—सरो सरस् नाम विज्ञानं, विज्ञानं नाम विविधं यज् ज्ञानं तत् विज्ञानम् and the one in whom such knowledge is sustained is sarasvati,—सरो नाम विज्ञानं विद्यते यस्या सा सरस्वती. Dayanand also derives the word similarly.*

Devaraja Yajvan, the commentator on Yaska's Nirukta, derives the word as "*sarah prasaranamasyastiti*", सरः प्रसरणमस्यास्तीति i.e. Sarasvati is one whose expanse is this entire creation. We have a very significant verse in which the Supreme Lord is represented as Sarasvati:

> सरस्वतीं देवयन्तो हवन्ते सरस्वतीमध्वरे तायमाने ।
> सरस्वतीं सुकृतो अह्वयन्त सरस्वती दाशुषे वार्यं दात् ॥ (Ṛv.X.17.7)
>
> Men aspiring for transcendental knowledge invoke the Lord Sarasvati; when one aspires to undertake sacred works for the good of all (*adhvara*), they also invoke Sarasvati. This Sarasvati blesses all of them

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* (सरस्वती) सरसः प्रशंसिता ज्ञानादयो गुणा विद्यन्ते यस्यां सा सर्वविद्याप्रापिका वाक् । सर्वधातुभ्यो ऽसुन् । Un. IV. 189; अनेन गत्यर्थात् सृ धातोरसुन् प्रत्ययः । सरन्ति प्राप्नुवन्ति सर्वा विद्या येन तत्सरः ।

who dedicate themselves for noble ends.

According to Aurobindo, *sarasvati* means "she of the Stream, the flowing movement", and is therefore, a natural name both for a river and for the goddess of inspiration. "But by what process of thought or association", says Aurobindo, "does the general idea of the river of inspiration come to be associated with a paricular earthly stream ? And in the Veda, it is not a question of one river which by its surroundings, natural and legendary, might seem more fitfully associated with the idea of sacred inspiration than any other. For it is a question not of one, but of seven rivers always associated together (*sapta-sindhavah*, सप्तसिन्धवः) in the minds of the Rsis and all of them released together by the stroke of the god Indra when he smote the Python who coiled across their fountains and sealed up their out-flow. It seems impossible to suppose that one river only in all this sevenfold outflowing acquired a psychological significance while the rest were associated only with the annual coming of the rains in the Punjab.* (*Aurobindo*, Vol. X. p. 88)

The word *sarasvati* occurs in three contexts particularly : (i) her invocation alone, (ii) her invocation along with various seven or more terms, which in later period came to be known as the names of several rivers in Northern India, particularly the Punjab, and (iii) her invocation along with the terms as Ila, Mahi and Bharati. Perhaps Mahi and Bharati may be identical. For we have a reference to "*tisro devir*" (the three enlightened ones) :

> इळा सरस्वती मही तिस्रो देवीर्मयोभुवः ।
> बर्हिः सीदन्त्वस्रिधः ॥ (Ṛv. I. 13.9)
> May the three undecaying goddesses, givers of delight, Ila, Sarasvati and Mahi, sit down upon sacred grass. (*Wilson*).

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* इमं मे गंगे यमुने सरस्वति शुतुद्रि स्तोमं सचता परुष्ण्या ।
असिक्न्या मरुद्वृधे वितस्तयाऽऽर्जीकीये शृणुह्या सुषोमया ॥ (Ṛv. X. 75.5)
According to the Nirukta, these seven are the streams of mid-space, i.e. of the vital and mental realms.

The translation has been considerably improved upon by Aurobindo : "May Ila, Sarasvati, and Mahi, three goddesses, who give birth to the bliss take their place on the sacrificial seat (*barhih*), they who stumble not", or "who come not to hurt", or "do not hurt (*asridhah*, अस्रिधः). Aurobindo further says that "the epithet means, I think, they in whom there is no false movement with its evil consequences, (*duritam*, दुरितं), no stumbling into pit falls of sin and error."

The same idea occurs in another verse of the Ṛgveda :

> आ नो यज्ञं भारती तूयमेत्विळा मनुष्वदिह चेतयन्ती ।
> तिस्रो देवीर्बर्हिरेदं स्योनं सरस्वती स्वपसः सदन्तु ॥ (Ṛv. X. 110.8)
>
> May Bharati come speeding to our sacrifice and Ila hither awakening our consciousness (or knowledge or perception) in humanwise, and Sarasvati,—three goddesses sit on this blissful seat, doing well the work. (*Aurobindo*).

The post-Vedic mythology regards Ila as the earth, the bride of Visnu; Sarasvati, the goddess of eloquence, and wife of Brahma; the third, synonymous with speech, is called the wife of Bharata, one of the Adityas,—of course, this mythology is meaningless in context with our Vedic hymns.

Considering the various passages of the Vedic Texts, Aurobindo comes to the conclusion that *sarasvati* is the *word*, the inspiration that comes from the *ṛtam*, the Truth-Consciousness. Light in the Veda is a symbol of knowledge, of spiritual illumination; Surya is the lord of supreme sight, the Vast Light; *bṛhat jyotih* (बृहत् ज्योतिः) or the True-Light, *ṛtam jyotih* (ऋतं ज्योतिः). (There is always a type of association between *ṛtam* and *bṛhat* in the Vedic Texts). Shall we not associate a sort of parallelism between *satyam*, *ṛtam* and *bṛhat* on the one hand, *sarasvati*, *ila* and *mahi* on the other ? Mahi is the *luminous vastness of Truth;* she represents the largeness, *bṛahat*, of the super-conscient in us containing in itself the truth, *ṛtam*. She is, therefore, for

the sacrificer like a branch covered with ripe fruit (*varutri dhisana*, वरूत्री धिषणा).*

> आ ग्ना अग्न इहावसे होत्रां यविष्ठ भारतीम् ।
> वरूत्रीं धिषणां वह ॥ (Ṛv. I. 22. 10)
> Youthful Agni, bring hither for our protection the wives (of the gods) Hotra, Bharati, Varutri and Dhisana. (*Wilson*).

There is a good deal of sense when Aurobindo (Vol. X. p. 91) says, that as *sarasvati* represents the truth—audition, *sruti*, (श्रुति) which gives the *inspired word*, so *ila* represents *dṛsti* (दृष्टि) or truth-vision; thus *dṛsti* and *sruti* are the two powers of the seer of the truth (*kavi* or *ṛsi*), thus a close relation between *ila* and *sarasvati*; and *bharati* or *mahi* is the largeness of truth-consciousness, which, dawning on man's limited mind brings with it the two sister puissances. This is one way of explaining the triad.

This triad has also to be worked out on other planes also :

		Truth-consciousness	*National*
Satyam	Ila	Dṛsti, insight	Character
Rtam	Sarasvati	Sruti-word	Speech (language)
Brhat	Mahi (Bharati)	Largeness	Culture

Sarasvati as one of the sapta-sindhus—The Vedic literature is abundantly rich in referring to *heptads* or groups of seven: the seven delights, *sapta ratnani* (सप्त रत्नानि), seven tongues or flames of fire, *sapta arcisah* (सप्तार्चिषः), *sapta jvalah* (सप्त ज्वालाः), seven forms of rays,

***Youthful Agni, bring hither for our protection the wives: Hotra, Bharati Varutri and Dhisana (*Wilson*). Varutri does not refer to a mythological goddess; it means *varaṇiya* (वरणीय), which means one worthy of being chosen, preferred, who is excellent; Dhisana is synonymous of *vac* (वाच्) or vag-devi (वाग्देवी), the goddess of speech. (*Wilson*).**

cows, *sapta sindhavah* (सप्त सिन्धवः), or seven mothers, *sapta matarah* (सप्त मातरः), seven fostering cows, *sapta dhenavah* (सप्त धेनवः), and of course the seven seers (Bears), *sapta ṛsayah* (सप्तर्षयः)

Just as we have the importance of heptads, we have dyads and triads also. Some of the significant dyads are : (i) divine and human, (ii) mortal and immortal; (iii) *rodasi* or heaven and earth, (iv) mind and body, (v) living (soul, *cetana*, चेतन) and non-living (matter or *jada*, जड), (vi) father and mother and so on. When heaven (*dyau*) and Earth (*pṛthivi*) symbolize two forms of natural energy, the mental and physical consciousness, they are no longer the father and mother, they become two-mothers. (*Aurobindo*, Vol. X. p. 93).

Amongst the well-known triads, we have (i) threefold divine principle, *sat-cit-ananda*, (सच्चिदानन्द), divine existence, divine consciousness and divine bliss, (ii) threefold mundane principles : mind, life and body corresponding to the three realms, mental sheath (*manomaya kosa*), vital or life-sheath (*pranamaya kosa*), and physical or material sheath (*annamaya kosa*). The three divine principles, *sat*, *cit* and *ananda*, combine with three mundane principles, mind, life and body, with a *uniting link* as the seventh one gives to the fullness *seven principles* (see *Aurobindo*, Vol. X. p. 93).

Mind (*manas*)				*anand* (bliss)		
Life (*prana*)	+	Joint link (*ṛtam bṛhat*)		*cit* (Consciousness)		
Body (*sarira*)		(*mahan arnava*)		*sat* (existence)		
3	+	1	+	3	=	7

Ṛtam bṛhat (ऋतं बृहत्) is the same as *mahạn arnava* (महान् अर्णव) or the Cosmic Mind or Cosmic Intelligence of the Vedic Texts, a link between the individual minds, and a link between in the infinitesimal individual mind and the Super-Mind.

In these terms, we have to understand *sarasvati* about which the Text says (I. 3. 11-12) :

चोदयित्री सूनृतानां चेतन्ती सुमतीनाम् ।
यज्ञं दधे सरस्वती ॥ (11)

Sarasvati, the inspirer of those who delight in truth, the instructress of the right-minded, has accepted our sacrifice).

महो अर्णः सरस्वती प्रचेतयति केतुना ।
धियो विश्वा विराजति ॥ (12)

Sarasvati makes manifest by her acts a mighty river and (in her own form) enlightens all understandings. (*Wilson*).

10

USA AND SVAR LOKA

We have seen what the seven rivers, *sapta apah*, *sapta sindhavah*, *sapta dhenavah*, or *sapta gavah*, or *saptagu* are. The seven waters are not merely seven channels, they are the waters of being (*ap* means to move, to flow, i.e. also to bring into being. cf. *apatya*, अपत्य, a child). Let us now see what these *usas*, (उषा), or dawns are. The hymn 30 of the First Book has verses devoted to Indra and Asvins and three to Usa. We have the following lines :

कस्त उषः कधप्रिये भुजो मर्तो अमर्त्ये ।
कं नक्षसे विभावरि ॥ (20)
Usas, who are pleased by praise, what mortal enjoyeth thee, immortal ? Whom, mighty one, dost thou affect ?

वयं हि ते अमन्मह्याऽन्तादा पराकात् ।
अश्वे न चित्रे अरुषि ॥ (21)
Deffusive, many-tinted, brilliant (Usas), we know not (thy limits), whether they be nigh or remote.

त्वं त्येभिरागहि वाजेभिर्दुहितर्दिवः ।
अस्मे रयिं निधारय ॥ (22) (Ṛv. I. 30.20-22)
Daughter of heaven, approach with these viands, and perpetuate our wealth.

The third Book has a beautiful hymn, III. 61, devoted to Usa. I shall reproduce here Aurobindo's translation of only one verse :

ऋतावरी दिवो अर्कैरबोध्या
रेवती रोदसी चित्रमस्थात् ।
आयतीमग्न उषसं विभातीं
वाममेषि द्रविणं भिक्षमाणः ॥ (Ṛv. III. 61.6)

> By heaven's illuminings one perceives her a bearer of the truth and rapturous she comes with its varied light into the two firmaments. From Dawn as she approaches shining out on thee, O Agni, thou seekest and attainest to the substance of delight.

The words *go*=cow, *asva*=horse, *ghṛta*=water or clarified butter, *vira*=man or hero, *apatya* or *praja*=offspring; *hiranya*=gold, *vaja*=food or even plenty are only the physical or ritualistic renderings of the terms, and similarly *usa*=dawn is a rendering of the physical or cosmic plane. These terms refer to deeper mystic meanings when applied to mental and spiritual realms.

It does then not mean that *usa* is not the physical dawn; according to the genius of Vedic expressions, one is gradually elevated from a lower realm to higher realms with deep inner meanings. We shall have in a few phrases, sometimes in one or two verses even, a reference to the dawn with which all of us are well-acquainted, and then the Divine Poetry would take us to the higher unknown and so far unrealized regions.

Dawn of the mystic meaning is the giver of cows, horses and other cattle; sometimes it is the bestower of food and wealth. In that case, it could not be the physical dawn, nor cows, horses, gold or food could be the mundane gifts of a household.

The Vedic Dawn is associated with cow (the lost cows), the sun, *panis* and their cave, *indra, bṛhaspati*, hound *sarama* and *angirasas*. The cows of the sun, and so the horses of the sun are a symbol for light. Sayana interprets cow (*gauh*) so often as *rays* also and sometimes as water. But in such contexts, we ought to take the word in a double sense, "light" as the true significance and "cow" as the concrete image and verbal figure. (*Aurobindo*, Vol. p. 119). For example, in I. 7. 3 we have "*vi gobhir adrim airayat*", वि गोभिरद्रिमैरयत् (charged the cloud with waters.— *Wilson* ; *go*=water).

इन्द्रो दीर्घाय चक्षस आ सूर्यं रोहयद् दिवि ।
वि गोभिरद्रिमैरयत् ॥ (Ṛv. I. 7.3)

> Indra, to render all things visible, elevated the sun in the sky, and charged the cloud with (abundant) waters.—*Wilson.*
>
> Indra for far vision made the sun to ascend to heaven; he sped him all over the hell by his rays.—*Aurobindo.*

The *go's* or cows are concealed by the enemy *vala*, (वळ), by the Panis (पणय:) and on this occasion, the invocation to Indra is "Thou didst uncover the whole of *vala* of the cows". Evidently *vala* is the concealer, the withholder of Light, and it is the concealed Light that Indra restores to the sacrificer. This recovering of the lost or stolen cows is constantly spoken of in the Vedic hymns. These cows are not the physical herds of stolen cows by the Dravidians, but the shining herds of the Sun, of the Light (that burns within all of us). The verses I.4.1,2 have a reference to this type of cow, the light.[1] Here we have a reference to Indra, the maker of perfect forms who is as a good milker in the milking of the cows, that his ecstasy of the Soma drink is verily "cowgiving", *goda id revato madah* (गोदा इद् रेवतो मद:). "It is the height of absurdity and irrationality", as Aurobindo says, "to understand by this phrase, that Indra is a very wealthy god, and when he gets drunk, exceedingly liberal in the matter of cowgiving." The fact is that the cow is the symbol of Light and that Indra, when full of the Soma ecstasy, is sure to give us the Light. (*Aurobindo*, Vol.X.p.120)

Dawn is also often described as *gomati* which then means luminous or radiant; she is again not only *gomati* but *asvamati* too; she has always with her her cows and her horses. She creates light for all the world and opens out the darkness as the pen of the cow (cow is a symbol of light):

> ज्योतिर्विश्वस्मै भुवनाय कृण्वती
> गावो न व्रजं व्युषा आवर्तम: ॥ (Ṛv. I. 92.4)

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1. सुरूप कृत्नुमूतये सुदुघामिव गोदुहे । जुहूमसि द्यवि द्यवि ॥
   उप नः सवना गहि सोमस्य सोमपाः पिब । गोदा इद् रेवतो मदः ॥
   (Ṛv. I. 4.1, 2)

Dawn is then further said to be drawn in her chariot sometimes of ruddy cows, sometimes by ruddy horses: *yunkte gavam arunanam anikam* (युङ्क्ते गवामरुणानामनीकम्), which clearly means "her host of ruddy rays". (I.124.11). She is further described as the mother of the cows or radiances; *gavam janitri akṛta praketum* (गवां जनित्र्यकृतप्रकेतुम्) (I.124.5), the mother of the cows (radiances) has created vision. She is the leader of the shining herds; (गवां नेत्री), (VII.76.6); she is the mother of the herds, the guide of the days; गवां माता नेत्र्यह्नामरोचि (VII.77.2). Finally, it has been very clearly mentioned that "her happy rays came into sight like the cows released into movements":— प्रति भद्रा अदृक्षत गवां सर्गा न रश्मयः (IV.52.5); and further, "the cows (rays) remove the darkness and extend the light," सं ते गावस्तम आवर्तयन्ति ज्योतिर्यच्छन्ति सवितेव बाहू (VII.79.2).

Further in a hymn (VII.75.7), dawn is described as sharing in the action of the gods by which the strong places where the cows are concealed are broken open and they are given to men: सत्यासत्येभिर्महती महद्भिर्देवी देवेभिर्यजता यजत्रैः। रुजद्दृळ्हानि दददुस्रियाणां प्रति गाव उषसं वावशन्त (True with the gods who are true, great with the gods who are great, she breaks open the strong places and gives of the shining herds; the cows low towards the dawn); and then in the next verse, she is invoked to establish for the sacrifices a state of bliss full of the cows (light), of the horses (vital force) and of many enjoyments*. Thus it is clear that when we talk of *usa* and the herds that she gives, we refer to the shining troops of Light recovered by the gods (and the *angirasa ṛsis*) from the strong places of *vala* and the *panis* and the wealth of cows for which a devotee prays is no other than a wealth of this same enlightenment. This invocation is not only for luminous delight or luminous plentitude, so often it is for luminous impulsion or force :

उत नो गोमतीरिष आ वहा दुहितर्दिवः ।
साकं सूर्यस्य रश्मिभिः ॥ (Ṛv. V. 79.8)

Bring to us, O daughter of heaven, luminous impul-

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* नो नु गोमद् वीरवद् धेहि रत्नमुषो अश्वावत् पुरुभोजो अस्मे । (Ṛv. VII. 75.8)

sions along with the rays of the Sun. Here *gomatirisa* (गोमतीरिष) is not luminous or radiant food (as Sayana interprets), and much more absurd would be to interpret it as "food of cow or cow's flesh."

SVAR LOKA

We are placed on the Earth (*prthivi*), may we rise to the *antariksa*,, the interspace over which extends our atmosphere; may we then rise to the celestial space, *dyauh*, the superspace of galaxies, stars and other luminous bodies; may we then further rise to the *svar loka*, much beyond the celestial one, the supra-celestial. So speaks a verse of the Yajurveda.[1] (XVII.67). Of course, it is not the physical body of ourselves that would be taken away on this sojourn; no space-craft can take us on this flight. This flight or movement is in our interior realm; *prthivi* (पृथिवी) or Earth represents exterior body, mundane and physical, the *annamaya* (अन्नमय); *antariksa* (अन्तरिक्ष), the atmosphere with winds is the realm of vital forces, the *pranamaya* (प्राणमय); and beyond it is the realm of mental behaviours, the psychological, the *manomaya* (मनोमय). But ultimately, we have to go a little beyond it, which is the *svar loka;* the non-material innermost sheaths of enlightenment and divine bliss, the *vijnanamaya* (विज्ञानमय) and the *anandamaya* (आनन्दमय).

The conquest or recovery of the Sun and the Dawn is a frequent subject of allusion in the hymns of the Ṛgveda. Sometimes it is the finding of Surya, sometimes the conquest of Svar, the world of supra-sun. This Svar is not a synonym of Surya; from several passages of the Vedas, it is clear that Svar is the name of a world, a realm which is beyond heaven,—above the ordinary *rodasi* (रोदसी), Heaven and Earth. We have occasionally a reference to *svarvatih apah* (स्वर्वतीः अपः), supra-heavenly water,—not the physical water; it is also *saranavatih* (सरणावतीः), the moving one. The thunderbolt of Indra is known as *svaryam*

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1. पृथिव्याऽअहमुदन्तरिक्षमारुहमन्तरिक्षाद् दिवमारुहम् ।
दिवो नाकस्य पृष्ठात् स्वर्ज्योतिरगामहम् ॥ (Yv. XVII. 67)

asmanam (स्वर्यमश्मानम्) the supraheavenly stone, which is not the ordinary thunderbolt;— it is the adamantine justice of firm determination, with which the clouds of darkness and ignorance are mercilessly smitten. Indra is also known as the presiding deity over this supraheavenly realm; he is *svarpati* (स्वर्पतिः), a Lord of supra-celestial region. Svar-realm is also known as *uru-loka*, the wide other world, उरु नो लोकमनु नेषि विद्वान् त्स्वर्वंज्ज्योतिरभयं स्वस्ति। (Ṛv. VI. 47.8).

We have already seen that the cows of the Vedic Texts are the hidden rays of the Dawn or of Surya (the sun); their rescue out of the darkness leads to or is the sign of the uprising of the sun that was hidden in the darkness; this is known as the conquest of Svar, the supreme world of Divine Enlightenment; and again then the Svar-world is the world of Divine Truth. The conquest of this Divine Truth is the highest objective of human aspirations.

Let me end this little note on the Svar-realm with a few Vedic passages, out of many :

1. युवं सूर्यं विविदथुर्युवं स्वर्विश्वा तमांस्यहतं निदश्च। (Ṛv.VI.72.1)
Ye found the Sun, Ye found Svar, Ye slew all darkness and limitations.

2. स्वर्यद् वेदि सुदृशीकमर्कैर्महि ज्योती रुरुचुर्यद्ध वस्तोः।
अन्धा तमांसि दुधिता विचक्षे नृभ्यश्चकार नृतमो अभिष्टौ॥

(Ṛv. IV. 16.4)

When by the hymns of illumination (*arkaih*), Svar was found, entirely visible, when they (*angirasas*) made to shine the great light out of the night, he (Indra) made the darkness ill-assured, so that men might have vision.

3. उरु नो लोकमनु नेषि विद्वान् त्स्वर्वं ज्ज्योतिरभयं स्वस्ति।

(Ṛv. VI. 47.8)

Thou in thy knowledge leadest us on to the wide world, even *svar*, the light which is freedom from fear, with happy being.

4. व्यस्तभ्ना रोदसी विष्णवेते दाधर्थं पृथिवीमभितो मयूखैः ।

(Ṛv. VII. 99.3)

उरुं यज्ञाय चक्रथुरु लोकं जनयन्ता सूर्यमुषासमग्निम् । (Ṛv. VII. 99.4)

Thou didst support firmly, O Visnu, this earth and heaven and uphold the earth all around by the rays. Ye two created for the sacrifice the *wide other world*, bringing into being the Sun, the Dawn and Agni.

5. घ्नन्तो वृत्रमतरन् रोदसी अप उरुक्षयाय चक्रिरे ।

भुवत् कण्वे वृषाद्युम्न्याहुतः क्रन्ददश्वो गविष्टिषु ! (Ṛv. I.36.8.)

Human beings, slaying the coverer (*vṛtra*), have crossed beyond both earth and heaven and made the wide world for their dwelling.

Thus this Svar loka of supra-celestial wideness, the one of illimitable light is supra-mental heaven, the heaven of the transcendental truth and bliss; of the immortal beatitude, and the light which is it's sustenance and constituent reality, is the light of truth. This is how Aurobindo also sees it and Dayananda also puts it. (cf. Dayanada on II.23.3; सूर्यवद्विद्याप्रकाशेनाविद्यान्धकारं निवर्त्य*).

Angiras and Angirasa

Both these words, *angiras* (अङ्गिरस्) and *angirasa* (आङ्गिरस) are very popular in the Vedic texts. Of course, the names of the seers and their descendents are also associated with such terms as Angirasas, Atris and Bharadvajas, but I shall take up the term *angiras* as such, not as a proper name associated with a historical person, or a mythological concept. In several verses of the Ṛgveda (and also other Vedas), the discovery of Agni or man-produced fire is attributed to the *angiras* or *atharvangiras*[1], the seer or the class of seers, whose names

1. त्वामग्ने अङ्गिरसो गुहा हित-
   मन्वविन्दञ्छिश्रियाणं वने वने ।
   स जायसे मथ्यमानः सहो महत्
   त्वामाहुः सहसस्पुत्रमङ्गिरः । (Ṛv.V.11.6)

Aurobindo regards *angiras ṛsis* as flame-powers of Agni and the *bhṛgus* as the solar powers of Surya.

appear as seers, *ṛsi* or *ṛsis* of hymns or some of their verses.

But then in the Ṛgvedic text, we have a reference to seven original *angirasa ṛsis*, as human fathers, *pitaro manusyah* (पितरो मनुष्याः), who discovered light and made the sun to shine and finally ascended to the Heaven of the Truth; then these *angirasas* are also spoken of or in connection with the finding of the cows. Whereas on the one hand, they appear to be deified human fathers, they are described as heavenly seers also, as sons of gods, sons of heaven, heroes and powers of the Asurah, the mighty Lord:

> इमे भोजा अङ्गिरसो विरूपा
> दिवस्पुत्रासो असुरस्य वीराः। (Ṛv. III. 53.7)

Then again, we have such passages in which our *angirasas* are symbolically powers o. *agni* (Fire), sometimes forces of symbolic light and flame, and so often, they appear to coalesce into a single seven-mouthed *angirasa* with his nine and ten rays of the light: नवग्वे अङ्गिरे दशग्वे सप्तास्ये।

In the Unadikosah there is a Sutra *angirah* (IV.237), about which Dayananda writes:

> अङ्गति प्राप्नोति जानाति वा स अङ्गिरः। ईश्वरोऽग्निः ऋषिभेदो वा।
> तस्यापत्यमाङ्गिरसः। असि प्रत्ययस्य इरुडागमः।

This means, that one who achieves, attains, or knows, or perceives is *angiras*, the Lord, the Agni, the seer too. The diminutive of *angiras* is *angirasa*.

A similar derivation has been accepted by all authorities. The words *angiras* and *agni* are closely associated. Both may be derived from the root √ *ang*, a nasalized form of √ag, meaning *gati-pujanayoh*, or movement, action, or light, and also adorable. In *agni*, we have a sense of brilliant or burning light, and we have numerous associated terms of similar connotations: *agni*, fire; *angati*, fire; *angara*, (अङ्गार) a burning coal, and *angiras*, which could mean flaming, glowing or burning. And this is

why, in Indian traditions *angirasas* are in their origin closely connected with Agni.

These Angirases are the devatas of the hymn X.62. 1-6; they are the sons of Agni: ते अङ्गिरसः सूनवस्ते अग्नेः परिजज्ञिरे (5) and have been born about him in different forms all about heaven: ये अग्नेः परिजज्ञिरे विरूपासो दिवस्परि (6), and in the next clause, it is added, speaking of them collectively in the singular: नवग्वो नु दशग्वो अङ्गिरस्तमः सचा देवेषु मंहते (6), nine-rayed, ten-rayed, most *angiras*, this *angiras* clan becomes together, as if, full of plenty with or in the gods.

These two verses (5-6) are to be read in coherence with the seventh one*. As said by Aurobindo, "aided by Indra they set free the pen of cows and horses, they gave to the sacrificer the mystic eight-eared kine [*asta karnyah*, (अष्टकर्ण्यः) has been often interpreted as the cow on the ear of which the numeral figure of eight has been scribed] and thereby create in the gods, *sravas*, the divine hearing or inspiration of the truth." From all this, one can conclude that the *angirases* are here the radiant lustres of the divine Agni which are born in heaven (in the mental realm), therefore of the divine flame and not of any physical fire; they become equipped with the nine rays of the light and the ten, became the *most-angiras*, that is to say, most full of the blazing radiance of Agni, the divine flame, and are therefore, able to release the imprisoned light and force and create supramental or transcendental knowledge. The relation between these divine *angirases* and the flaming lustres of Agni may also be seen from several verses, such as:

तुविम्रक्षासो दिव्या नवग्वा
वना वनन्ति धृषता रुजन्तः। (Ṛv. VI.6.3)

and

कया ते अग्ने अङ्गिर ऊर्जो नपादुपस्तुतिम्।
वराय देव मन्यवे ॥ (Ṛv. VIII.84. 4)

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* इन्द्रेण युजा निः सृजन्त वाघतो
व्रजं गोमन्तमश्विनम्।
सहस्रं मे ददतो अष्टकर्ण्यः
श्रवो देवेष्वक्रत ॥ (Ṛv.X.62.7)

In this one, we have "अग्नि-अङ्गिरस्, as son of energy, (*urjo-napat*)"; and also V.11.6, which we have already quoted earlier: Thee, O Agni, the Angirases found thee established in the secret place (*guham hitam*), lying in wood and wood (*vane-vane*).

And when we talk of light or fire in the Vedic texts, we do not always talk of the physical or figurative. "We must not imagine", so says Aurobindo, "that the Vedic poets were crude and savage intellects incapable of the obvious figure, common to all languages, which makes the physical light a figure of the mental and spiritual, of knowledge, of an inner illumination". (*Aurobindo*, Vol. X. p. 158).

Angiras is, then, not only the Agni-powers; in several verses, he has been referred to as also a Bṛhaspati-power. We have, for example, a line:

> यो अद्रिभित् प्रथमजा ऋतावा
> बृहस्पतिराङ्गिरसो हविष्मान्—(Ṛv. VI.73.1)
> Bṛhaspati, breaker of the hill (the cave of the *panis*) the first-born, who has the truth, the *angirasa*, he of the oblation.

And similarly, we have in another verse a mention of Bṛhaspati as the *angirasa* :

> प्र सप्तगुमृधीतिं सुमेधां बृहस्पतिं मतिरच्छा जगाति।
> य आङ्गिरसो नमसोपसद्योऽस्मभ्यं चित्रं वृषणं रयिं दाः।
>
> (Ṛv. X. 47.6)

The thought goes towards Bṛhaspati, the seven-rayed, the truth-thinking, the perfect intelligence, who is the *angirasa*, to be approached with obeisance.

Indra is also described as becoming an *angirasa*, or as becoming possessed of the *angirasa* quality (I.100.4); he would like to have all the epithets of Angirasas :

> सो अङ्गिरोभिरङ्गिरस्तमो भूद् वृषा वृषभिः सखिभिः सखा सन्।
> ऋग्मिभि ऋंग्मी गातुभिर्ज्येष्ठो मरुत्वान् नो भवत्विन्द्र ऊती॥
>
> (Ṛv. I. 100.4)

Indra in becoming the *angirasa* becomes *marutvan*, possessed of, or companioned by the *maruts*, luminous and violent gods of the storm and the lightning, uniting in themselves the vehement powers of *vayu* (wind), breath, the Lord of life, and the force of *agni*, the seer-will.

Maruts are even said to be as it were "Angirases with their Sama (साम) hymns, they who take all forms.":

विश्वरूपा अङ्गिरसो न सामभिः (Ṛv. X. 78.5)

It must also be remembered that Usa has also been invoked in terms of Angirasa; Usa has been described as *angirastama*, and *indratama*. It is so, because the power of *agni*, the *angirasa* power, manifests itself also in the lightning of Indra and in the rays of the Dawn, for we have, in VII.79.2-3 :

व्यञ्जते दिवो अन्तेष्वक्तून् विशो न युक्ता उषसो यतन्ते ।
सं ते गावस्तम आवर्तयन्ति ज्योतिर्यच्छन्ति सवितेव बाहू ॥ (2)
अभूदुषा इन्द्रतमा मघोन्यजीजनत् सुविताय श्रवांसि ।
वि दिवो देवी दुहिता दधात्यङ्गिरस्तमा सुकृते वसूनि ॥ (3)

(Ṛv. VII. 79.2-3)

The Dawns make their rays to shine out in the extremities of the heaven; they labour like men, who are set to work. The rays set fleeing the darkness; they extend the light as if the Sun were extending its two arms.

Usa has come into being most full of Indra power (*indratama*), opulent in riches, and has given birth to the inspirations of knowledge for our happy going (for good and bliss), the goddess, daughter of heaven, most full of *angiras-hood* (*angirastama*), orders her riches for the doer of good works. (*Aurobindo*).

11

THE MARUTS, SARAMA AND PANIS

The hymn 6 of the First Book of the Ṛgveda for the first time refers to Maruts; its stanzas 4 to 9 are devoted to this *devata* (deity). In this *sukta*, there is a beautiful stanza for Indra :

केतुं कृण्वन्नकेतवे पेशो मर्या अपेशसे ।
समुषद्भिरजायथाः ॥ (Ṛv. I.6.3)

Mortals, you owe your birth (to such an Indra) who with the rays of the morning gives sense to the senseless and to the formless form. (*Wilson.*)

The Maruts are invoked with Indra, both rejoicing and of equal splendour (मन्दू समानवर्चसा I. 6. 7). Maruts are not alone; they come in troops; they stay somewhere in the region of sky or come from the solar space :

अतः परिज्मन्नागहि दिवो वा रोचनादधि (Ṛv. I. 6. 9).

According to the Scholiast, there is a reference to the *asuras*, named *panis*, who are supposed to have stolen cows of the gods or of the *angirases*, and hidden them in a cave, where they were discovered by Indra with the help of the bitch *sarama*. A dialogue between *sarama* and robbers, *panis* is given in the hymn X. 108, in which she conciliates them. In other passages the cows are represented as forcibly recovered by Indra with the help of the Maruts.

In another hymn I. 15, Indra not only drinks *soma* in the company of *ṛtu* (divinified *season*), but the *maruts* also join in it. The hymn I. 64 is collectively devoted to the Maruts, where the Maruts are the senders of rain, and ripeners of fruits :

वृष्णे शर्धाय सुमखाय महद्भ्यः । (1)

These Maruts are born handsome and vigorous from the sky : they are the sons of Rudra, the conquerers of the foes, pure from sin, purifiers of all, radiant as suns, powerful as evil spirits, diffusers of rain drops and of fearful forms :

ते जज्ञिरे दिव ऋष्वास उक्षणो रुद्रस्य मर्या असुरा अरेपसः ।
पावकासः शुचयः सूर्या इव सत्वानो न द्रप्सिनो घोरवर्पसः ॥

(Ṛv. I.64.2)

These Maruts decorate their persons with various ornaments; for elegance, they have brilliant jewelery on their breasts; lances are borne upon their shoulders; they are leaders, born from the sky, of their own accord.

चित्रैरञ्जिभिर्वपुषे व्यञ्जते वक्षः सु रुक्माँ अधि येतिरे शुभे ।
अंसेष्वेषां नि मिमृक्षुॠष्टयः साकं जज्ञिरे स्वधया दिवो नरः ॥

(Ṛv. I.64.4)

These Maruts are very brave persons; in the battles, they roar like lions (सिंहा इव नानदति, 8). On the other hand, they are benevolent to men (नृषाचः, 9); they scatter the nutritious waters; as grooms they lead forth a horse; they bring forth for its rain the fleet-moving cloud, and milk it thundering and unexhausted (6). They are vast, possessed of knowledge, bright shining, like mountains in stability, quick in motion, and like elephants, they put vigour in their ruddy mares (7). These Maruts, again, are the augmenters of rain; they drive with golden wheels the clouds asunder (11). These Maruts have been invoked for durable riches, attended by posterity and for riches reckoned by hundreds and thousands and ever increasing (15).

The hymns I.85-88 are again devoted to these Maruts, with additional informations. Sometimes, they decorate as females; they are gliders through air; they are the sons of Rudra (रुद्रस्य सूनवः); sometimes they yoke deer to their chariots for getting rain released from clouds; and thence they moisten the Earth like a hide with water :

प्रयद् रथेषु पृषतीरयुग्ध्वं वाजे अद्रि मरुतो रंहयन्तः ।
उतारुषस्य विष्यन्ति धाराश्चर्मेवोदभिर्व्युन्दन्ति भूम ॥ (Ṛv. I.85.5)

Maruts have numerous achievements to their credit. Indra slays Vṛtra (the coverer) with the help of Maruts. By their power, they bore the well aloft, and clove asunder the mountain that obstructed their path; they brought the crooked well to the place (where the *muni* was), and. sprinkled the water on the thirsty Gotama*; the variously radiant Maruts came to his succour gratifying the desire of the sage with life sustaining waters (11).

जिह्मं नुनुद्रेऽवतं तया दिशा सिञ्चन्नुत्सं गोतमाय तृष्णजे ।
आ गच्छन्तीमवसा चित्रभानवः कामं विप्रस्य तर्पयन्त धामभिः ॥

(Ṛv. I. 85. 11)

(Thirsty Gotama's reference is also in I.88.4-5).

Maruts are in possession of swift-moving cars in which they fly like birds along well-defined paths; they collect clouds from the firmament and release water from them.

Maruts have been invoked to come with their brilliant light-moving, well-weaponed, steed-harnessed chariots, and they descend like birds, bringing with them abundant food:

आ विद्युन्मद्भिर्मरुतः स्वर्कैं रथेभिर्यात ऋष्टिमद्भिरश्वपर्णैः ।
आ वर्षिष्ठया न इषा वयो न पप्तता सुमायाः ॥ (Ṛv. I.88.1)

Combining with the solar rays, these Maruts willingly pour down rain for the welfare (of people):

श्रियसे कं भानुभिः सं मिमिक्षिरे
ते रश्मिभिस्त ऋक्वभिः सुखादयः। (Ṛv. I. 87.6)

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* Based on such Vedic verses, we have a legend, that Ṛsi Gotama, being thirsty, prayed to the *maruts* for relief who thereupon brought a well from a distance to his hermitage. The same legend appears in reference to Asvins (Nasatya) who raised up the well and made the base, which had been turned upwards. He curved mouth, so that the water issued for the beverage of the thirsty Cotama. (Ṛv. I. 116.9)

By scattering the clouds (or the first born of the clouds, *ahi*) and dispersing the darkness, Indra may be said to be the parent of the Sun and day light (आत् सूर्यं जनयन् द्यामुषासम्, I.32.4). In the struggle against this coverer, Vṛtra, or *ahi* (the clouds, the darkness), Maruts also accompanied Indra, but they did not attack Vṛtra; they merely stood nigh and encouraged Indra, saying, "O Indra, O Lord, strike: show thyself a hero" (*brahmana*); for we have, "verily, Indra, thou hast slain the wealthy barbarian with thine adamantine (bolt); thou singly assailing (him), although with auxiliaries (the Maruts) at hand."

विधीहि दस्युं धनिनं घनेनं एकश्चरन्नुपशाकेभिरिन्द्र। (Ṛv. I. 33.4)

We have in the Aitareya Brahmana [III. 16 (Xii. 5)], the lines: "when Indra had slain Vrtra, all the deities left him, thinking, 'He had not laid (him) low', the Maruts only his true comrades, did not leave; the Maruts, true comrades are the *breaths*; the breaths did not then leave him". We have a further passage in the Aitareya Brahmana : Indra, being about to slay Vṛtra, said to all the deities, 'Do you support me: do ye call to me'. Be it so', (they replied). They ran forward to slay. He (Vṛtra) perceived. They are running hither to slay me; well let me terrify them'. Against them he breathed forth. Before his snorting in haste, all the gods ran away, but *the maruts did not abandon him*, saying, 'Smite, O blessed One; strike, show thy strength'; they supported him. Seeing this the seer declares :

> 'Before the snorting of Vṛtra in haste, all the gods, thy comrades, abandoned thee. With the Maruts, O Indra, be there friendship for thee'.

'Then shalt thou conquer ever foe'. Thus Indra realized, these Maruts are indeed his friends. They showed me love: Well, let me give them a share in this litany. [Ait. Br. III. 20 (xii. 9)].

These Maruts, the vital breaths, are thus the only

friends of Indra, the self-consciousness.

There is another text in the Ṛgveda, I.37.5. Praise the sportive and the restless might of the Maruts, who were born amongst kine (*gosu-marutam*, गोषु मरुतम्) (the tribe of Maruts among the cows); and whose strength has been nourished by the enjoyment of milk.

प्रशंसा गोष्वघ्न्यं क्रीळं यच्छर्धो मारुतम्।
जम्भे रसस्य वावृधे ॥ (Ṛv. I.37.5)

Here in the text, as has been pointed out by M. Langlois, the cows represent the clouds, and milk the rain. Aurobindo takes the psychological interpretation. A text further says that Maruts were born of milk for *pṛsni*: पृश्नियै वै पयसो मरुतः (*pṛsni=dhenu*=milch cow). In this connection we have: "That you, sons of *pṛsni*, may become mortals and your panegyrist become immortal.

यद् यूयं पृश्निमातरो मर्तास स्यातन।
स्तोता वो अमृतः स्यात् ॥ (Ṛv. I.38.4)

Maruts are further known to be the partakers of the evening oblations (I.87.1), and hence they are so often known as *ṛjisiṇah* (ऋजीषिणः) :

प्रत्यक्षसः प्रतवसो विरप्शिनो ऽनानता अविथुरा ऋजीषिणः।
जुष्टतमासो नृतमासो अञ्जिभिर्व्यानिजे केचिदुस्रा इव स्तृभिः॥
(Ṛv. I.87.1)

> Annihilators (of adversaries), endowed with great strength, loud-shouting, unbending, inseparable partakers of the evening oblation, constantly worshipped and leaders (of the clouds), (the Maruts) by their personal decorations, are conspicuous (in the sky), like certain rays of the sun (or of stars=*stṛbhih*). (*Wilson.*).

The Scholiast, Sayana, has proposed various etymologies of name Marut (I.87.4), some of which have been

borrowed from Yaska, the Nirukta XI.13*. They *sound* (*ruvanti*, रुवन्ति from √*ru*), having attained mid-heaven (*mita*, मित); or, they *sound* without measure (*amitam*); or they *shine* (from √*ruc*) in the clouds made (*mitam*) by themselves; or they *hasten* (*dravanti*) in the sky. It has further been said, that all the minor divinities that people the mid-air are styled as Maruts; all females whose station is the middle-heaven, the all-pervading masculine *vayu* and all the troops (of demigods) are Maruts. Sayana in this connection refers to the mythology of the birth of fortynine Maruts, in seven troops, as the sons of Kasyapa. In the Satapatha Brahmana, II.5.1.13, we have a mention of seven-seven ($=7 \times 7=49$) Maruts (सप्त सप्त हि मरुतो गणाः) whilst in the Jaimini Brahmana, we have a reference to 40 Maruts (चत्वारिंशत् मरुतो देवाः),—perhaps the remaining nine are the goddesses, like *marici* (मरीचि) etc.

Marici is perhaps the best amongst the Maruts. About three *maricis*, we have in the Satapatha Brahmana (V.3.4.21): एता वा आपः स्वराजो यन् मरीचयः, ता यत् स्यन्दन्तऽइवान्योऽन्यस्या ...उत्तराधरा इव भवन्त्यो यान्ति, which means the self-luminiscent water aggregates dispersed in space constitute *marici*; these aggregates move up and down.

The Satapatha also mentions of the Maruta-rays (मारुत-रश्मयः), different from the Sun's rays. Perhaps the Marut-rays and the *maricis* are radiations scattered by water-aggregates, and they exhibit brilliant colours. (*mita-rocinah*).

The Nirukta quotes the verse I.88.1 in the context of Maruts:

आ विद्युन्मद्भिर्मरुतः स्वर्कैं रथेभिर्यात ऋष्टिमद्भिरश्वपर्णैः ।
आ वर्षिष्ठया न इषा वयो न पप्तता सुमायाः ॥ (Ṛv. I.88.1)

Come, Maruts, with your brilliant light-moving, well-weaponed, steed-harnessed chariots; doers of good deeds, descend like birds (and bring us) abundant food. (*Wilson*).

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*अथातो मध्यस्थाना देवगणाः । तेषां मरुतः प्रथमागामिनो भवन्ति । मरुतो मितराविणो वा । मितरोचिनो वा । महद् द्रवन्तीति वा । तेषामेषा भवति, Nir. XI. 13). Ma-rutah, of measured sound; or of measured brilliancy (√*mi* √*ruc*); or they run away with much (*mahad*+ *dru*)

Whilst explaining the word *marut* in the Unadikosa, Dayananda writes: म्रियते मारयति वा स मरुत् मनुष्यजातिः पवनो वा (I.94). This means, one who is killed, or the one who kills is *marut*; it may mean men in general and wind (or air) also.

To Dayananda, Maruts are the important persons of a society occupying high offices, and therefore, he has translated the term differently according to the context. The same has been recommended by Yaska also : न तु पृथक्त्वेन मंत्रा निर्वक्तव्याः, प्रकरणानुकूलतया पूर्वापरसम्बन्धेनैव नितरां वक्तव्याः (*Dayananda*). We shall refer to Dayananda's interpretation of Maruts in a few cases from the Yajurveda :

(i) Learned men; guests and the *rtviks* (participators in the *yajnas* (Yv. III. 44).
(ii) The householders (Yv. III. 45).
(iii) Wind or air (Yv. XV. 13).
(iv) Men in groups (Yv. XVII. 1, 80-83).
(v) Distinguished commanders of an army (Yv. XVII.47).
(vi) Men of learning (Yv. XVII. 86).
(vii) Heads of the State (king), people, priests (*rtviks*) and men of learning. (Yv. XVII. 86).
(viii) Mortal men (Yv. XXXIV. 48).
(ix) Souls in general (Yv. XXXIX. 7).

In the Ṛgveda, the entire *suktas* (hymns) devoted to Maruts are : I. 37-39; 64;85-88;166;167;172; II. 34; V. 52-61; 87; VII. 56-59 and VIII. 7.

In these *suktas*, Dayananda interprets Maruta (मारुत) as the characteristic (good or evil) of wind (1.37,38) and Maruts are those persons who are vested with the qualities of wind: e.g., in I. 37.12, Maruts are the people of State, even heads of army; in I. 38.3, people speedy in movements like wind; in I. 38.80 as simply wind; in I. 38.11 as the adepts in Yoga; in I. 39. 1,8,9,10, as men of learning; in I. 64. 1,6, as wind; in I. 64.9, as *rtviks* well-versed in technology; in I. 64.14, as men vested with the qualities of wind; in I.85, as wind or wind-like brave soldiers and commanders of army; in I.87.2, as men

employed in public bodies; in I.88.1 as the head of a state, or even people; in I. 166.1, as men in general; in I.166.3 as wind; in I.166.11,12 men working with the speed of wind or efficiency of vital breath; in I.166.9,14, men with the valour and strength of wind; in I.166.13; I.167.6; I.172.1, men loving as vital breath; in I.167.9, as strong people; in I.167.11; II. 34.8,9, as men of learning; in II. 34.1,2,5,6,11,15; V. 52.1-4, as mortals or men; again in V. 52.6 as wind; *maruta* (मारुत) also as belonging or pertaining to men of learning in V.52.1,3, and similarly else-where in the Fifth Book where he favours the interpretation as "men in general".[1]

"Indra, in becoming the Angirasa", so says Aurobindo, "becomes Marutvan, possessed of or companioned by the Maruts, and these Maruts, luminous and violent gods of the storm and the lightning, uniting in themselves the vehement power of Vayu, the Wind, the Breath, the Lord of Life, and the force of Agni, the Seer-Will are, therefore, seers who do the work by knowledge, कवयो विद्मना अपसः, as well as battling forces who by the power of the heavenly Breath and the heavenly lightning overthrow the established things, the artificial obstructions, कृत्रिमाणि रोधांसि, in which the sons of Darkness have entrenched themselves, and aid Indra to overcome Vṛtra and the Dasyus. They seem to be in the esoteric Veda the Life Powers that support by their nervous or vital energies the action of the thought in the attempt of the mortal consciousness to grow or expand itself into the immortality of the Truth and Bliss". (*Aurobindo*, Vol. X. p.163).

These Maruts have been described in VI. 49.11, as acting with the qualities of the Angirasa (*angirasvat*), "O young seers or powers of the sacrifice, Maruts, come uttering the word to the high place (or desirable plane of earth or the hill, अधि सानु पृश्नेः, VI. 6.4., which is probably the sense of *varasyam* according to Aurobindo), powers increasing, rightly moving (on the path, *gatu*) like the Angirasa, give joy even to that which is not illumined (अचित्रम्), that which has not received the varied light of

1. For मरुत् see V. 52.5,6; for मारुत V. 52. 8,13,14, (मारुतं, मारुतं गणम्).

the dawn, the night of our ordinary darkness". The Maruts have also been said to be as it were "Angirasas with their Saman hymns, they who take all forms (विश्वरूपाङ्गिरसो न सामभिः).

In the conquest over darkness, the circumscribing Night (रात्री परितक्म्या, V. 30.14), *vṛtra ahi*, *sambara* (I. 59.6) and *vala*, the Titans, Giants, Pythons, subconscient powers, who hold the light and the force in themselves, in their cities of darkness and illusion, not only Indra, but Maruts, Angirasas and also *pitṛs*, the human fathers, have played a very important role.

It appears that this colossal darkness, the supramental nescience, in our struggle never gives it up to man, the mental being. The struggle is incessant and would ever go on in our inner realms with fresh vigours on either side. This nescience, or ignorance, has not merely to be cut away from us, but broken up and into, and made to yield up the secret of light and good and infinity (*satya, ṛta and bṛhat*). Out of this death, that immortality has to be conquered. "Pent up behind this ignorance", says Aurobindo, is a secret knowledge and a great light of Truth; prisoned by this evil is an infinite content of good; in this limiting death is the seed of a boundless immortality". (Vol. X. p.110).

Sarama and Panis—In this conquest over ignorance, an important role has also been played by Sarama (सरमा), about whom a legend was interwoven and who has come to be known as the Hound of Heaven, a bitch, accompanied with two Sarameya (सारमेयौ) dogs, white and black with four eyes (X. 14. 10-11).[1] This hymn is normally known to be the Funeral Hymn, where these two dogs, sons of Sarama, are messengers of Yama; but in fact, this hymn is not one of Death, so much as a hymn of Life and Immortality. It is worth noting the real character of Yama and his two dogs in the Vedic Text. In the Ṛgveda, Yama is not the god of Death but is some sort of the Sun; in the Asya Vamiya Sukta (I. 164), it is one of the names

1. अतिद्रव सारमेयौ श्वानौ चतुरक्षौ शबलौ साधुना पथा। (Ṛv. X. 14.10)
   यौ ते श्वानौ यम रक्षितारौ चतुरक्षौ पथिरक्षी नृचक्षसौ। (Ṛv. X.14.11)

of the Sun (as well as of the Supreme Self), the other names being Indra, Mitra, Varuna, Agni, Suparna Garutman, and Matarisvan (46). Pusan and Yama both in the Isa Upanisad (16) are the appelations of the Sun (or God with Divine Light), or Yama is one of the twin children of the wide shining Lord of Truth. Yama is the guardian of Dharma, the Law of the Truth (सत्य धर्म) :

> हिरण्मयेन पात्रेण सत्यस्यापिहितं मुखं
> तत्त्वं पूषन्नपावृणु सत्यधर्माय दृष्टये ॥ (Isa. 15)
> The face of Truth is covered with a brilliant golden lid; that dost thou remove, 0 Pusan, 0 fosterer, the law of the truth, for sight (15).

> पूषन्नेकर्षे यमसूर्य प्राजापत्या व्यूह रश्मीन् समूह ।
> तेजो यत्ते रूपं कल्याणतमं तत्ते पश्यामि योऽसावादित्ये पुरुष:
> सोऽसावहम् । (Isa. 16).
> 0 Pusan (0 fosterer), 0 sole seer, or ordainer (Yama), 0 illuminating Sun, 0 Power of the Father of Creatures (Prajapati), marshal thy rays, draw together thy light; the Lustre which is thy most blessed form of all, that in Thee I behold. The Purusa there and there, He am I. (Isa. 16).

And so Yama is the fosterer, very much of the group of the Sun, Prajapati, Pusan, connected with Eternal Truth and Divine Light. His messengers (यमस्य दूतौ, X. 14.12), the two sons of Sarama, should also be somehow connected with this Truth and Enlightenment. The Hymn X. 14 has to be taken in this light : The soul of the heaven-ascending mortal is bidden to "outrun the two four-eyed vari-coloured Sarameya dogs on the good path."

> अतिद्रव सारमेयौ श्वानौ चतुरक्षौ शबलौ साधुना पथा । (Ṛv. X. 14.10)
> Of that path to heaven, they are the four-eyed guardians, protecting man on the road by their divine vision.

and Yama is asked to give them as an escort to the soul on its way (यौ ते श्वानौ यम रक्षितारौ चतुरक्षौ पथिरक्षी नृचक्षसौ) These

dogs are "wide moving, not easily satisfied", and range as the messengers of the Lord of the Law (*yama*) among men. And the hymn prays, "May they (the two dogs) give us back bliss here in the unhappy (world) so that we may look upon the Sun:

उरूणसावसुतृपा उदुम्बलौ यमस्य दूतौ चरतो जनाँ अनु ।
तावस्मभ्यं दृशये सूर्याय पुनर्दातामसुमद्येह भद्रम् ॥ (Ṛv. X. 14.12).

The hymn X.108 is devoted entirely to a colloquy of Sarama and Panis. The information given in this hymn is also contained in the earlier references to Sarama in the Ṛgveda implicitly or explicitly: I.62.3; 72.8; III.31.6; IV.16.8; and V.45.7, 8.

इन्द्रस्याङ्गिरसां चेष्टौ विदत् सरमा तनयाय धासिम् ।
बृहस्पतिर्भिनदद्रिं विदद् गाः समुस्रियाभिर्वावशन्त नरः ॥ (Ṛv. I.62.3)
When the search was set on foot by Indra and the Angirases, Sarama secured food for her young; then Bṛhaspati slew the devourer and rescued the kine, and the gods, with the cattle, proclaimed their joy aloud.

स्वाध्यो दिव आ सप्त यह्वी रायो दुरो व्यृतज्ञा अजानन् ।
विदद् गव्यं सरमा दृहळमूर्वं येनानु कं मानुषी भोजते विट् ॥

(Ṛv. I.72.8)

The seven pure rivers that flow from heaven, (are directed, Agni, by thee: by thee the priests), skilled in sacrifices, knew the doors of (the cave where) the treasure, (their cattle), were concealed; for the Sarama discovered the abundant milk of the kine, with which man, the progeny of Manu, still is nourished.

Sarama, of course, is some power of the Light, and probably of the Dawn. The Vedic texts so often refer to the struggle between Indra and the Sons of the Cave; the struggle is symbolic between the powers of Light and Darkness.

I shall again repeat here, as I have done elsewhere,

that, as Aurobindo also says (Vol. X.p.133), all the gods (the divine virtues) are conquerers and givers of the cows, the horses and the divine riches: but it is especially, the great deity, Indra, the *self*, who is the hero and fighter in this struggle or warfare and who wins for the man (the human complex) the Light and Force. *Cow* evidently stands for light, and *horse* for force. Therefore, Indra is constantly addressed as the master of the herds, *gopati*; he is even imaged himself as the cow and the horse; he, again, is the good milker whom all the persons of wisdom, the seers, wish to milk and what he yields are perfect forms and ultimate thoughts; he is *vṛsabha* (वृषभ) or the Bull of the herds; his is the wealth of cows, the enlightenment, and horses, the impelling forces for attaining enlightenment and beatitude; which all of us covet. And therefore, we have a verse:

> गावो भगो गाव इन्द्रो मे अच्छान् गावः सोमस्य प्रथमस्य भक्षः।
> इमा या गावः स जनास इन्द्र इच्छामीद् धृदा मनसा चिदिन्द्रम् ॥
>
> (Ṛv. VI. 28.5)
>
> O people, these that are the cows, they are Indra; it is Indra I desire with my heart and with my mind.

This identification of cow and Indra is also very significant.

The *dasyus* who withhold or steal the cows are called the *panis*. Remember that these *dasyus* or *panis* are not historical people; they in the Veda do not represent a race either. They are one of us, and are present in all of us; and against them we have to wage a war, since they steal away our coveted riches, our cows, our horses, which have to be ravished from them by violence. The Arya is a personification of virtue and divine thoughts; he has to be constantly at guard against *dasyus*, a synonym of evil thoughts, wickedness, the nescience and darkness. It is so often that *dasyus*, the devils, take possession of us, they steal our virtues, they cover our wisdom with ill-thoughts, and thus they steal our cows, horses and other riches. In that case, *with the aid of all the gods*, the Self, Indra, has to discover and recover the lost wealth.

The *dasyus* who withhold or steal the divine wealth,

the cows, are called the *panis*, a word originally meaning doers, dealers or traffickers; they are misers of the extreme. In the Unadi-kosa (IV. 119), the word Pani has been explained by Dayananda as "यः पणायति व्यवहारति, स पणिः, वणिग्वा." The market place or lane of trade or business is known similarly *vipanih* (विपणिः). At another place (II.71) the similarity between the *vanik* (the trader or businessman) and *pani* has been shown thus ;

पणायति व्यवहारतीति वणिक्, वैश्यो वा; प्रज्ञादित्वात् स्वार्थे ऽङ् वाणिजः ।

Normally the term *pani* is not derogatory, but when the same person, the same dealer, becomes a hoarder, a black-marketeer, a miser, a stealer, then the term stinks of an evil connotation*. In relation to Indra, Bṛhaspati, cows, the Angiras, Sarama, and the Sarameya dogs, the word *pani* stands under a malevolent category.

The Nirukta (II.16;17) discusses the verses I. 32.10;11 in details :

अतिष्ठन्तीनामनिवेशनानां काष्ठानां मध्ये निहितं शरीरम् ।
वृत्रस्य निण्यं विचरन्त्यापो दीर्घं तम आशयदिन्द्रशत्रुः ॥ (Ṛv. I.32.10)
The waters carry off the nameless body of Vṛtra, tossed into the midst of the never-stopping, never-resting currents. The foe of Indra has slept a long darkness. (*Wilson*).

दासपत्नीरहिगोपा अतिष्ठन् निरुद्धा आपः पणिनेव गावः ।
अपां बिलमपिहितं यदासीद् वृत्रं जघन्वाँ अप तद् ववार ॥ (Ṛv. I.32.11)
The waters, the wives of the destroyer, guarded by *ahi* stood obstructed like the cows by *pani*; but by slaying Vṛtra, Indra set open the cave that had confined them. (*Wilson*).

Commenting on the latter verse (11), Yaska says :

पणिर्वणिग्भवति । पणिः पणनात् । वणिक् पण्यं नेनेक्ति, that is, *pani* is,

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*** Similar to the word *pani*, in English language the word *jew* has double connotations (i) one who professes Judaism (goods sense), (ii) usurer trader who drives hard bargains (derogatory).**

one who trades, who is engaged in business; who enhances the value or worth of a saleable article by giving a cleansed appearance (*nenekti*) (II.17). Regarding *vṛtra*, the comment says:

वृत्रो वृणोतेर्वा । वर्ततेर्वा । वर्धतेर्वा ॥

यदवृणोत्तदु वृत्रस्य वृत्रत्वम् इति विज्ञायते । यदवर्तत तदु वृत्रस्य वृत्रत्वम् इति विज्ञायते । यदवर्धत तद् वृत्रस्य वृत्रत्वम् इति विज्ञायते । (Nir II.17).

Vṛtra is derived from √vṛ (वृ), to cover, or from √vṛt (वृत्), to roll, or from √vṛdh (वृध्), to grow. Vṛtra is so-called because he covered, because he rolled and because he grew.

The chief of Panis is Vala (वल), a demon whose name signifies probably the "circumscriber" or "encloser", as Vṛtra means obstructor or enfolding coverer. "It is easy to suggest" so writes Aurobindo (Vol. X. p. 134), "as do the scholars who would read as much primitive history as possible into the Veda, that the *panis* are the Dravidians and Vala is their chief or god. But this sense can only be upheld in *isolated passages;* in many hymns, it is incompatible with the actual words of the *ṛsis* and turns into a jumble of gaudy nonsense their images and figures".

Vala dwells in a lair, a hole (*bila* बिल) in the mountains; Indra and the Angirasa *ṛsis* have to pursue him there and force him to give up his wealth: for he is Vala of the cows, वलस्य गोमतः (Ṛv. I.II.5). The Panis also are represented as concealing the stolen herd in a cave of the mountain which is called their concealing prison, (*vivara*, विवर) or the pen of the cows, *vraja* (व्रज), or sometimes in a significant phrase, *gavyam urvam* (गव्यमूर्वम्), meaning cowly wideness or the luminous wideness; the vast wealth of the shining herds. To recover this lost wealth, the sacrifice has to be performed; the Angirases or else Bṛhaspati and the Angirases together have to chant the true word or *mantra*; Sarama, the heavenly hound, has to find out the cows in the cave of Panis. Indra, strong with Soma-wine and the Angirases, the seers, his companions, have to follow the track, enter the cave or violently break open the strong places of the hill, defeat the Panis and drive

upward the delivered herds. Remember, Indra is not, then, the only god who can break open the tenebrous cave and restore the lost radiances. There are other deities to whom various hymns make the attribution of the great victory. Usa is one of them, the divine Dawn, mother of these herds. (VII.75.7)[1]; Agni is another, who fights alone and sometimes with Indra too (VI.60.2)[2]; sometimes with Soma (I.93.4)[3]; sometimes Soma and Indra together (VI.44.2); sometimes the credit goes to Asvins also (VI.62.11)[4]; and also to Angirases (I.112.18)[5]; and so the Maruts (VI.66.8) as we have already seen, and also Pusan (VI.54.5,6,10). Sarasvati is also a killer of the Panis. In this context we are told (I. 100.18), that Sarama found the strong wideness of the cows. By right thought the seven Mighty Ones of heaven (the seven rivers) knew the Truth and knew the doors of bliss; Sarama found the strong wideness of the cows and by that the human creature enjoys."

स्वाध्यो दिव आ सप्त यह्वी रायो दुरो व्यृतज्ञा अजानन् ।
विदद् गव्यं सरमा दृहळ्मूर्वं येना नु कं मानुषी भोजते विट् ॥

(Ṛv. I.72.8)

Who are the Panis, who are the cows, who is Sarama, and who are the others who collectively give a form to the entire Vedic parable ? Is it the Sun of divine enlightenment, dwelling in darkness that has to be brought back from the innermost cavity of man, shrouded with evil thoughts. The cows are the Light of the Sun, but in the Vedic Text, not of the mundane Sun which rises and sets every day in the celestial and earthly worlds. It is the Sun of Divine Light of spirituality which is to be invoked. It would be worth while to interpret the whole parable esoterically. *Thoughts* (*dhi*, धी) provide us with milk that

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1. प्रति गाव उषसं वावशन्त । (Ṛv.VII.75.7)
2. ता योधिष्टमभि गा इन्द्र नूनमपः स्वरुषसो अग्न ऊळ्हाः । (Ṛv. VI.60.2)
3. अग्नीषोमा चेति तद् वीर्यं वा यदमुष्णीतमवसं पणिं गाः । (Ṛv I.93.4)
4. वृळहस्य चिद् गोमतो विव्रजस्य दुरो वर्तं गृणते चित्रराती । (Ṛv.VI.62.11)
5. याभिरङ्गिरो मनसा निरण्यथोऽग्रं गच्छथो विवरे गोअर्णसः । (Ṛv.I.112.18)

nourishes us, it is the spiritual Power (*asva*, अश्व), and Light or enlightenment (*go*, गो), which are to be invoked in our struggle against the dominating influence of darkness, Vṛtras, Dasyus or Panis. The inferior truth of this world is mixed with much falsehood and error (अनृतस्य भूरेः) (VII. 60.5); on the other hand, we have to proceed to the Home of Truth (सदनाद् ऋतस्य, I.164.47; IV.21.3), a place where we have the triplet—the Truth, the Right and the Vast (*satya*, *ṛta* and *bṛhat;* Atharva. XII.1.1). We shall have to march ahead on the paths of Truth (ऋतस्य पथ्याः, III.12.7). Here in this world, we are engaged in a fight against evils, sins and darkness. Gods belong to the side of truth and devils and satans to the side of untruth; our satanic adversaries have been given in the Vedic texts the names of Vṛtra, Vala, Dasyus, Panis, or their kings. These powers of darkness have concealed light from us; or they rob us of it, and thus obstruct the inflow of the streams of Truth (ऋतस्य धाराः, V.12.2; VII.43.4); they do not permit our soul to ascend as if. Let us, therefore, pursue our inner sacrifice; let us invoke all Divinities in us, muster our strength, and with their help ascend to the cherished goal. For this, we shall have to develop right thinking and right understanding, and pursue the path of right action (ऋतस्य प्रेषा, ऋतस्य धीतिः, I.68.5). We are on a battle on one hand which is also our sacred pilgrimage. To assist us, all of us have an Inner Fire, an Inner Flame as our path-finder, a guide, a leader, a torch, the light of consciousness. Let us all have a Sarama with us, an intuitive secret help to show a way where all other aids fail; then invoke other goddesses, Sarasvati, Ila, and Bharati. One who goes through the text of the Veda, the Divine Revelation, he would find this Grand Parable elaborated or hinted at in various forms. And within the mystic meaning of the parable is incorporated the entire code of our human life on both the lowest and highest planes of achievement,—this is the most sublime philosophy of the Vedic Dynamic Realism.

12

ṚSIS OR THE VEDIC SEERS

Ṛgveda is homogeneous in structure

It has been the trend of the Western scholars to have differentiated between the different *mandalas* or Books of the Ṛgveda, belonging to different dates, containing the material essentially differing in cultural levels and in being the compositions of different authors belonging to various schools. For example, Wilson writes : "The absence of any obvious dependency of the *suktas* upon one another is sufficiently indicative of their separate and unsystematic origin. That they are the compositions of the partiarchal sages to whom they are ascribed, is sometimes, apparent from allusions which they make to the name of the author or of his family; but these indications are of unfrequent recurrence, and we must trust in general to tradition, as preserved by the Anukramanikas (अनुक्रमणिका) for the accuracy of the appropriation. Their being addressed to the same divinity is a less equivocal test of community and they probably were composed in many instances by the heads of families, or of schools following a similar form of worship, and adoring in preference particular deifications. Besides the internal evidence afforded by difference of style, the hymns not unfrequently avow a difference of date; and we find some ascribed to *ancient ṛsis,* while others admit their being of *new* or *newest* compositions. The great variety of metres employed shows also a progressive developments of the language, which could have been the effect only of long and diligent cultivation."

The Western mind, quite contrary to the Indian tradition, very readily discovers "progressive developments", and usually works on the evolutionary hypotheses and is very much prone to ignore homogeneity of material. Wilson accepts certain uniformities in entire Ṛgvedic

material when he says, "There can be little doubt, therefore, that they (the Books) range through a considerable interval, although, as far as respects their general purport, they belong to the same condition of belief, and to a period during which no change of any importance took place in the national creed. The same divinities are worshipped in a similar strain, and with one or two doubtful exceptions, which are possibly interpolations, or which may admit of explanation offer nothing that is contradictory or incongruous."

It is to the credit of Dayananda and later on also of Aurobindo to have declared in unequivocal terms that the Ṛgveda is one in all its parts. It cannot be treated in strata. To Dayananda, not only the Ṛgveda, but all the four Vedas go to constitute the Single Veda, as if Aurobindo says, "whichever of its ten Mandalas we choose, we find the same substance, the same ideas, the same images, the same phrases. The Ṛsis are the seers of a single truth and use in its expression a common language. They differ in temperament and personality; some are inclined to a more rich, subtle and profound use of Vedic symbolism; others give voice to their spiritual experience in a barer and simpler diction, with less fertility of thought, richness of poetical image or depth and fullness of suggestion. Often the songs of one seer vary in their manner, range from the utmost simplicity to the most curious richness. Or there are risings and fallings in the same hymn; it proceeds from the most ordinary conventions of the general symbol of sacrifice to a movement of ced and complex thought. Some of the suktas are ı and almost modern in their language; others baffle first by their semblance of antique obscurity. But differences of manner take nothing from the unity piritual experince, nor are they complicated by any ariation of the fixed terms and the formulae. In the deep and mystic style of Dirghatamas Aucathya as in the melodious lucidity of Medhatithi Kanwa, in the puissant and energetic hymns of Visvamitra as in Vasistha's even harmonies we have the same firm foundation of knowledge and the same scrupulous adherence to the sacred convent-

ions of the Initiates."

Thus Dayananda and Aurobindo are one in accepting a type of uniformity and congruency in the entire Vedic fabric texture. The entire Veda propounds one single Vedic Philosophy (the philosophy of life which is capable of gradually lifting one from the lowest rung of human life to the highest transcendental one, and takes into account the interwoven fabric of the entire human corporeal complex, starting from the grossest exterior, and finally by and by merging into the most subtle interior).

VEDIC SEERS

There is, however, a fundamental difference between Aurobindo and Dayananda. To the former, the traditional Vedic Ṛsis, whose names are preserved for us in the Sarvanukramanis and which have been associated with the hymns, are the persons of divine experiences, which became media for the spiritual knowledge. Dayananda in this respect follows Yaska, the celebrated author of the Nirukta; to them these *ṛsis* or seers are the persons who gave us the expositions from time to time of the inner meanings of the revealed hymns. The revealed hymns existed much prior to them. Of course, their elaborate expositions of the hymns are not available to us. The Supreme Self is the creator of this vast phenomenal world, including our human complex and simultaneousy, from the Self, we have received the Sacred Word (the Veda) too, and it was left to the ancient *ṛsis* to work-out the coherency and congruency between all that was given to us as the Revealed Word and the truths that lie hidden in the ever-changing phenomenal universe. To Dayananda, the entire Veda is not the mystic enigma alone. The Vedas take us gradually from the *so-obvious simple truths* to the depths of transcendental mystic realities. The Vedas are meant for our today and tomorrow both.

I shall not enter into the details of this discussion. It is very creditable, almost miraculous, that the Ṛg Samhita is not only available to us with the Samhita and the Pada-Pathas we are in possession of numerous Vedic

indexes also. The Sarvanukramani (edited by Macdonell, Oxford, 1886) has been composed by Katyayana and it is, as its name indicates, a collection of various indexes for the Ṛgveda. This work gives, in the form of Sutras, the first words of every hymn, the number of verses in that hymn, the name and the family of the *ṛsi* to whom the hymn is ascribed, the *devata* (the deities) or the subject title to which the hymn is devoted, and the metre or metres in which the hymn is composed. We have another index also, known as the Arsanukramani which is ascribed to Saunaka and it enumerates the *ṛsis* of the Vedic hymns according to the Mandalas. There is another book, of great importance to us, known as the Bṛhad-devata, also ascribed to Saunaka. It constitutes a more or less exhaustive manual dealing with *devatas* (gods so to say) celebrated in various hymns of the Ṛgveda. It contains almost forty legends referring to these gods, and is, therefore, an important work also. Some of the scholars place this book chronologically between the Nirukta on one hand and the Sarvanukramani on the other.

The Sarvanukramani provides a list of 407 *ṛsis* for the entire Ṛgveda. We are obliged to V.G. Rahurkar for his monograph "The Seers of the Ṛgveda", (Poona, 1964) for a detailed discussion on the subject of these *ṛsis*. The word *ṛsi* appears to have been variously derived. The Taittiriya Aranyaka[1] derives it from *abhi* +*a*+*ṛs* (to go upwards, to appear). Sayana derives it from ṛs (=to go)[2]. He further gives the grammatic derivation from *ṛs*+*in*. Dayananda bases his derivation on the Nirukta VII. 3. Seers have visions of the mantras[1]. *Ṛsis* have the penetra-

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1. भजान ह यं पृश्नींस्तपस्य मानान् ब्रह्म स्वयम्भ्वभ्यानषत तद् ऋषयोऽभवन् । (Tai. Ar. II. 9).
2. ऋष् गतौ इति धातुः, वेदप्राप्त्यर्थं तपोनुतिष्ठतः पुरुषान् स्वयंम्भूवेंद पुरुषः प्राप्नोत् । (see Comm. on I. 12). इन् प्रत्ययान्त ऋषि शब्दः, "ऋष्यन्धक" (Ast. IV. 1.14) इति निपातनात् लघूपद गुणाभावः (Ast. IV. 1.14), कित् प्रत्ययो वात्र ज्ञेयः (Un. IV. 559).

Ṛsayah—मन्त्रार्थविद; (Yv. XXXI. 9) i. e. ṛsi is one who knows the sense of the Vedic verses. (*Daya.*); ऋषिर्दर्शनात्: ṛsi is so-called from his having vision (Nir. II. 11.); ऋषीणां मन्त्रदृष्टयो भवन्ति (*Daya.* on Ṛv. I. 1. 2.); i,e.

ting insight, through which they are able to interpret the correct sense of the Vedic Texts for the good of every one of us. They are not the authors of the mantras but only the interpreters. The moment the Vedas were revealed in the beginning of human creation of a developed mind, the ancient seers started giving a serious thought as to the correct interpretation of the Vedic Texts. Names of some of these interpreters have been traditionally handed down to us, as the *seers of the hymns*. (Ṛgbhabhu, *Dayananda*, Chapter on Questions and Answers). In the beginning of the earliest culture, not to speak of the *proper nouns*, there were very few common names even. Many of the *ṛsis* have yet no names of their own, and they came to be known by certain terms or words occuring in the hymns which they had interpreted to the earlier society. The word thus occuring in the hymn is not a proper name, but later on in the history the *ṛsi* associated with this hymn came to be known by a term which occurs in a particular *mantra*. There is no history or historical names in the Vedic Texts. Later on in history, almost in all the periods, it was held sacred to give proper names out of the common terms occuring in the Vedic Texts. Later on in literature, mythological stories were concocted in connection with these seers. Wilson has ignored this traditional aspect of assigning names, and therefore, he has erred in many of his statements like "most of the *ṛsis* (associated with the Vedic Texts) are familiar to the legends of the Puranas, as Gotama, Kanwa, Bharadvaja, Vasistha, Visvamitra and others."

The hymns of the Second Book are associated (as interpreters with the Seer Gṛtsamada (गृत्समद), the son of Sunahotra, of the family of Angiras (आङ्गिरसः शौनहोत्रः); those of the Third, to Visvamitra, (विश्वामित्र), his sons and his kinsmen; of the Fourth to Vamadeva (वामदेव); of the Fifth to Atri (अत्रि) and his sons, who are rather of equivocal nomenclature; of the Sixth, to Bharadvaja, (भरद्वाज); and of the Seventh, to Vasistha (वसिष्ठ) and his descendants.

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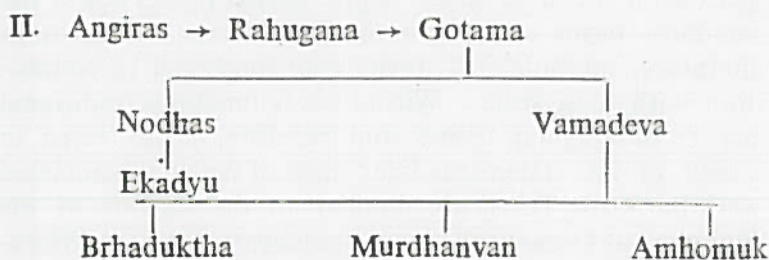
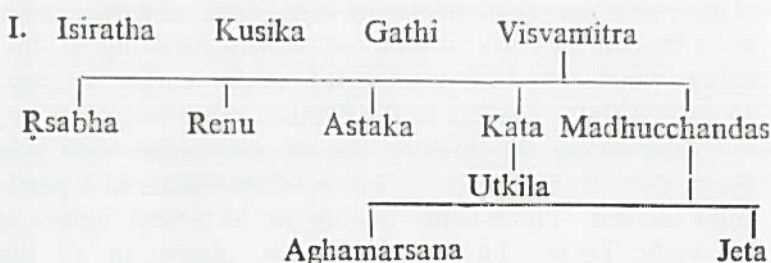
seers have visions of their poetic compositions (Laksman Sarup on Nir. VII.3). The ṛsis have direct vision of the sense carried by the Vedic verses. (*Daya.*).

The *ṛsis* of the First and three last Books are more miscellaneous. It must be accepted and well realized that it would be futile to establish a chronological sequence to these Books—the order of these Books indicates neither the chronological sequence of their arrangement in the Samhita revelation or interpretation, nor the intellectual eminence, prominence or mystic depth nor the social families which are traditionally believed to have got associated with them.*

The genealogies of some of the *ṛsis* are given in the Sarvanukramani; for example:

*It has been sometimes suggested that the order of the Books Two to Seven is governed by the ascending number of hymns in these Books. The Second Book has the smallest and the Seventh has the greatest number of hymns. But this generalization fails to exist in the case of the Fourth and the Sixth Books, unless we rearrange the hymns in these Books as suggested by Bergaigne. Brough on the other hand points out that there is a striking symmetry of arrangement so far as the nucleus of the Ṛgveda is concerned. The Gṛtsamadas of Book II are the sole representatives of the Bhṛgus (भृगु). Books IV, VI and VIII represent the three well-known subdivisions of the Angirasas, namely the Gautamas (गोतम), the Bharadvajas and the Kevala Angirasas represented by the Kaṇvas (कण्व). On the other hand, Books III, V and VII belong to the non-Bhṛgu Angiras *gotras*. (*V. G. Rahurkar*).

[—(I.) इषिरथ, कुशिक, गाथी, विश्वामित्र, ऋषभ, रेणु, अष्टक, कट, उत्कील, मधुच्छन्दस्, अघमर्षण, जेता; (II.) अङ्गिरस्, राहुगण, गोतम, नोधस्, एकद्यु, वामदेव, बृहदुक्थ, मूर्धन्वान्, अंहोमुक्]

III. The *pravaras** of the Gotama family are given in the Asvalayana Srauta Sutras :

Family		*Pravaras*
Gotama	गोतम	Angiras, Ayasya, Gotama
Ucathya	उचथ्य	Angiras, Ucathya, Gotama
Rahugana	राहुगण	Angiras, Rahugana, Gotama
Somaraja	सोमराज	Angiras, Somaraja, Gotama
Vamadeva	वामदेव	Angiras, Vamadeva, Gotama
Bṛhaduktha	बृहदुक्थ	Angiras, Bṛhaduktha, Gotama

IV. The various Sutrakaras have given the *pravaras* of Atris (अत्रि) as follows:

Sutrakara	*Pravaras of Atris*
Baudhayana	Atreya, Arcananas, Syavasva
(बोधायन)	Atreya, Arcananas, Vadbhutaka
	Atreya, Arcananas, Gavisthira
Katyayana and	Atreya, Arcananas, Syavasva
Laugaksi	Atreya, Gavisthira, Paurvatithi
(कात्यायन, लौगाक्षि)	Atreya, Vamarathya, Pautrika
Apastamba	Atreya, Arcananasa, Syavasva
(आपस्तम्ब)	Atreya, Arcananas, Gavisthira
	Atreya, Arcananas, Atitha

*The theory of *pravara* (प्रवर) is closely interwoven with that of *gotra* (गोत्र); the concept of *pravara* (literally "choice in vocation") entered into several domestic ceremonies like marriage, mekhalabandhana, in the Sacred Thread ceremony, and in the Caulakarma. The word *pravara* denotes one or more illustrious ancestors of the sacrificer,—the family ancestor of repute, or prominent *mantrakṛta* (मन्त्रकृत), seer.

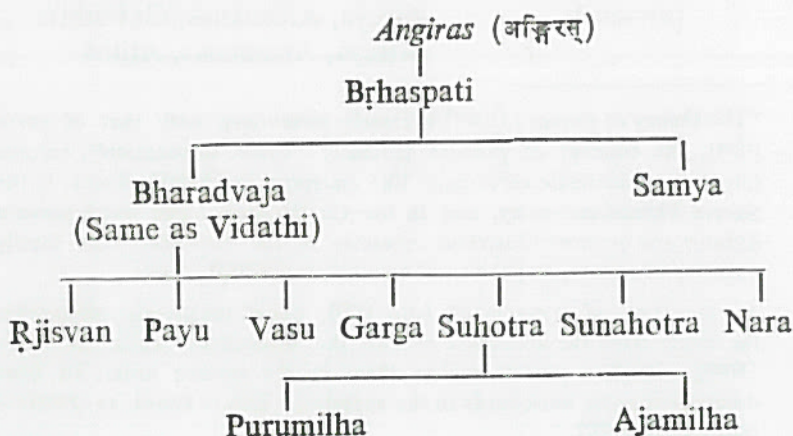
At the time of a ceremony, *hotṛ* (होतृ, one of the priests) enumerates the names from the ancestor down to the descendent, whilst *adhvaryu* (अध्वर्यु, another priest) recites them in the reverse order, i e. from descendent going backwards to the ancestor. This is known as *pravaroccara* (प्रवरोच्चार).

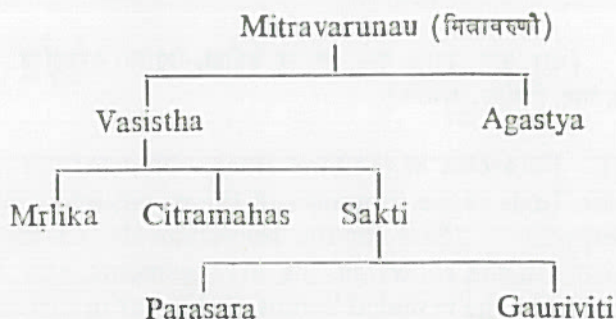
Asvalayana (आश्वलायन)	Atreya, Arcananas, Syavasva Atreya, Arcananas, Gavisthira Atreya, Arcananas, Paurvatitha

(आत्रेय, अर्चनानस् आर्चनानस्, श्यावाश्व, वाभूतक, गविष्ठिर, पौर्वातिथि, वामरथ्य, पौत्रिक, आतिथ).

More than fifty Atris (seers belonging to the family of Atri अत्रि, i.e. आत्रेयाः) have been mentioned in the Ṛgveda:

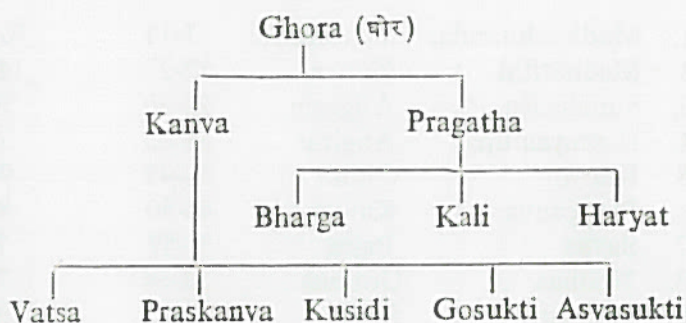
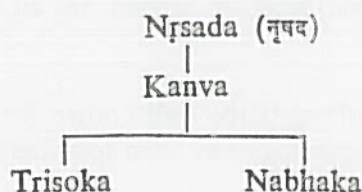
> Budha, Gavisthira, Kumara (or vṛsa), Vasusruta, Isa, Gaya, Sutambhara, Dharuna, Puru, Dvita Mṛktavahasa, Vavri, Prayasvat, Sasa, Visvasaman, Dyumna, Bandhu, (Sabandhu, Srutabandhu or Viprabandhu), Visvavara, Gauriviti, Babhru, Avasyu, Gatu, Samvarana, Prabhuvasu, Atri, Avatsara (Sadapṛna or Sutambhara etc.), Sadapṛna, Pratiksatra, Pratiratha, Pratiprabha, Svasti, Syavasva, Srutavid, Arcananas, Ratahavya, Yajata, Urucakri, Bahuvṛkta, Paura, Avasyu, Saptavadhri, Satyasravas, Atri Bhauma, Evayamarut, Apata, Gopavana, Trita, Andhigu, Visvakarman, and Bhuvana (and Sadhana).

V. The genealogy of the Bharadvajas (भरद्वाज), as provided by Sarvanukramani is something like this :

(भरद्वाज, बृहस्पति, विदथी, शंय, ऋजिश्वन्, पायु, वसु, गर्ग, सुहोत्र, पुरुमीळ्ह, अजमीळ्ह)

VI. Vasistha (वसिष्ठ) is the well known Ṛsi of the Seventh Book, and his genealogy has been formulated as below:

[वसिष्ठ, अगस्त्य, मृळीक, चित्रमहस्, शक्ति, पराशर, गौरिवीति]

VII. About thirty members of the Kanva family are associated with the Ṛgvedic hymns as Seers :

Ayu, Bharga, Brahmatithi, Devatithi, Gosukti (also Asvasukti), Haryat, Irimbithi, Kali, Kurasuti, Kusika, Kusidi, Kṛsa Matarisva, Medhatithi (or Medhyatithi), Medhya, Nabhaka, Narada, Nipatithi, Parvata, Pustigu, Pṛsadhra, Pragatha, Praskanva, Sadhvamsa, Sasakarna, Suparna, Sobhari, Srustigu, Trisoka, and Vatsa or Punarvatsa).

One of the genealogies of the Kanva family is as follows:

[घोर, कण्व, प्रगाथ, वत्स, प्रस्कण्व, कुसीदी, गोसूक्ति, अश्वसूक्ति, कलि, हर्यंत्, नृषद, कण्व, त्रिशोक, नाभाक]

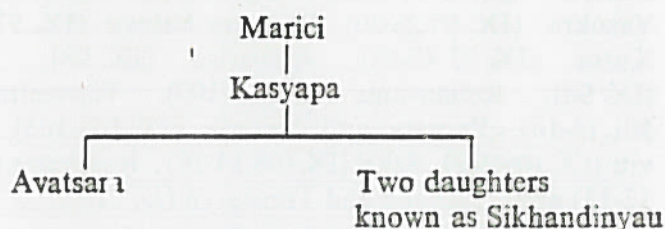
VIII. **Satarcins of the First Book**—None of the *ṛsis* of the Vedic Texts is the composer of the poem; he is either the interpreter or (Seer) or the *samhitikaraka*, i.e. the one who assisted in the *collection*, the arrangements, and the compilation of the revealed hymns. Rahurkar in this connection observes, "Books I to X are generally believed to constitute the latest strata of the Ṛgvedic composition. On a careful examination of the suktas in these Books, however, it would seem that the above statement applies to the process of *Samhitikarana* in respect to these suktas rather than to their actual composition. The *ṛsis* of the First Book are referred to as *satarcinah*. They are so referred to under the assumption that each of these *ṛsis* (or the whole miniature family group relating to that *ṛsi*) has contributed hundred *ṛks* to the Ṛgveda Samhita." In this respect, Rahurkar gives an interesting table :

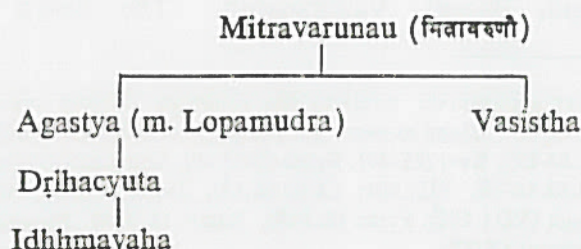
Group No.	Ṛsi	Patronym	Hymns	No. of verses
1.	Madhuchhandas	Visvamitra	1-11	102
2.	Medhatithi	Kanva	12-23	146
3.	Sunahsepa	Ajigarta	24-30	96
4.	Hiranyastupa	Angiras	31-35	71
5.	Kanva	Ghora	36-43	96
6.	Praskanva	Kanva	44-50	82
7.	Savya	Pajra	51-57	72
8.	Nodhas	Gotama	58-64	74
9.	Parasara	Sakti	65-73	91
10.	Gotama	Rahugana	74-93	204

Group No.	Rsi	Patronym	Hymns	No. of verses
11.	Kutsa	Angiras	94-115	192
12.	Kaksivat	Dirghatamas	116-126	153
13.	Parucchepa	Divodasa	127-139	100
14.	Dirghatamas	Ucathya	140-164	237
15.	Agastya	Mana	165-191	222

[मधुच्छन्दस्, मेधातिथि, शुनःशेप, हिरण्यस्तूप, कण्व, सव्य, नोधस्, पराशर, गोतम कुत्स, कक्षीवत् परुच्छेप, दीर्घतमस्, अगस्त्य]

Of course, as would be seen from this table, the concept of *satarcinah* will have to be modified; Gotama, Dirghatamas and Agastya are associated with more than 200 *ṛks*, whilst three of the *ṛsis* (Hiranyastupa, Savya and Nodhas) are associated with near about 73 Mantras only.

IX. The genealogy of the Kasyapa (कश्यप) family as given in the Sarvanukramani is as follows:

[मरीचि, कश्यप, अवत्सार, शिखण्डिन्यौ]

X. The genealogy of Agastya, according to the Sarvanukramani is as follows:

[अगस्त्य, लोपामुद्रा दृळहच्युत, वसिष्ठ]

XI. **Seers of the Pavamana Book**—The hymns of the Ninth Book are addressed to a single deity, the Pavamana Soma; the other Books have also hymns devoted to Soma. Many of the seers associated with the hymns of the Ninth Book figure in other Books too: e.g. Madhucchandas (IX.1), Medhatithi (IX.2, 4), Sunahsepa (IX.3); Hiranyastupa (IX.69), Asita and Devala (IX. 5-7, 8-24), Dṛlhacyuta (IX.25), Idhmavaha (IX.26), Rahugana Gotama (IX.107), Syavasva (IX.32), Trita (IX.102), Rahugana (IX.37-38), Medhyatithi (IX. 41-43), Nidhruvi (IX. 63), Kasyapa (IX.64,67,4-6,91,92,113-114), Vatsapri Bhalandan (IX.68), Renu (IX.70), Kaksivan (I. 116-125; 126, 1-5; IX.74), Vasu (IX. 80-82), Vena, (IX.85), Atri Bhauma (IX.67.10-12;IX. 86.41-45;X.137.7), Gṛtsamada (IX.86.46-48), Vasistha (IX. 90), Nodhas (IX. 93), Kanva (IX. 94), Praskanva (IX. 95) Pratardana Daivodasi (IX.96), Vasistha (IX.97.1-3), Pramati (IX. 97.4-6), Vṛsagana (IX .97.7-9), Manyu (IX. 97.10-12), Upamanyu (IX. 97.25-27), Vasukra (IX. 97.28-30), Parasara Saktya (IX. 97.31-44), Kutsa (IX. 97.45-48), Ambarisa (IX. 98), Ṛjisvan (IX. 98), Rebhasunu (IX. 99-100), Visvamitra (IX. 101.13-16), Parvata and Narada (IX. 104-105), Gauriviti (IX.108.1-2), Sakti (IX.108.14-16), Ṛnancaya (IX.108. 12-13) and Tryaruna and Trasdasyu (IX.110).

The following are the seers who are in no way associated with the Books I to VIII but almost exclusively belong to Book IX:

Nṛmedha, Priyamedha, Bindu, Prabhuvasu, Bṛhanmati, Ayasya, Kavi, Ucathya, Avatsara, Amahiyu, Jamadagni, Bhṛgu[1], Vaikhanasah. The Seven Seers

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1. The Sarvanukramani mentions the following thirteen members of the family of the Bhṛgu as seers of the Ṛgvedic mantras: Ita (X.171), Usnas (IX.87-89), Kavi (IX.47), Kṛtnu (VIII.79), Cyavana (X.19), Jamadagni (III.62.16-18; VIII.101; IX.62,65,67), Tanva (IX.93), Nema (X. 89), Pṛayoga (VIII.102); Pṛthu (X.148), Rama (X.110), Somahuti (II. 4), Syumarasmi (X.77).

(Saptarsi)[1] Vatsapri Bhalandana, Ṛsabha Vaisvamitra, Harimanta Angirasa, Pavitra, Vasu Bharadvaja, Prajapati Vacya (or Vaisvamitra); the three *rsi* groups (each with peculiar double names IX.86): Akrstah Masah, Sikitah Nivavari, prsniyah Ajah; Usanas, Andhigu, Yayati[2], Nahusa, Manu Samvarana, Trita Aptya, Dvita Aptya, Agni, Caksus and Manu[3], Uru (IX.108.4-5) (perhaps an angirasa), Ṛjisvan (IX.108.6-7), Urdhvasadman Angirasa, Krtayasas (an angirasa, IX.108.10-11), Ṛanancaya (IX.108.12-13), Agni Dhisnyas (sons of Isvara, IX.109), Tryaruna and Trasadasyu (IX.110)[4], Ananata (IX.111) and *Sisu (IX.112).

The *rsis* of the Ninth Book have been classified as (i) Agastyas, (ii) Angirasas, (iii) Atreyas, (iv) Kasyapas, (v) Kanvas, (vi) Bharadvajas, (vii) Bhargavas, (viii) Vasisthas, (ix) Vaisvamitras and (x) Others unclassified.

XII. **The Seers of the Tenth Book**—Out of the total 151 Seers of this Mandala, 78 belong to the category of Ksudra-suktas, and 73 to the category of Mahasuktas:—this Book has been so often called as the residual Mandala, after having classified the Ṛks into definite groups during the process of the *samhitakarana*. In many cases the *samhitakaras* were not known at all, their names have been missing: where it was lost,—either wholly or partially—the *samhitakaras* have tried to recreate it as if. Rahurkar, in

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1. The Seven Seers are Bharadvaja, Kasyapa, Gotama, Atri, Visvamitra, Jamadagni, Vasistha, (IX.67, also IX. 107, and X.137); their families are thus indicated:
   (i) Bharadvajo Barhaspatyah
   (ii) Kasyapo Maricah
   (iii) Gotamo Rahuganah
   (iv) Bhaumo' trih
   (v) Vishvamitro Gathinah
   (vi) Jamadagnir Bhargavah
   (vii) Maitra-varunir Vasisthah
2. The Sarvanukramani gives the genealogy as follows:
   Savarna, → Manu, → Nahusa, → Yahati.
3. Manu Apsava is the father, Caksus the son and Agni the grandson (IX.106).
4. Genealogy: Durgaha→Giriksit→Purukutsa (m. Purukutsani)→ Trasadasyu,→ Hiranin.

his studies on the seers of the Ṛgveda, has suggested four categories for the Tenth Book:

1. This category includes all seers in whose case both the personal name as well as the family-name are historically authentic.

2. A seer whose family-name is historical but whose personal name appears to be fictitious or conjectural.

3. A seer whose personal name appears to be authentic and historical, but whose family names are conjectural or invented.

4. Those cases where family names and personal names both appear to be conjectural.

The Tenth Book has the seers associated with the *ksudra suktas* (shorter hymns) and *maha suktas* (longer hymns). We do not know whether it is a mere coincidence that the number of hymns in the First Book is 191, and so is the number of hymns in the Tenth Book (191). To some of the scholars, it so appears that the *samhitakaras* deliberately made the hymns of the Tenth Book shorter or longer in this peculiar manner, because they wanted that the number of hymns in the First and the last Book to exactly coincide.

Some of the conjectured seers of the Tenth Book for obvious reasons are the following :

(i) *Panis and aramā* (पणि-सरमा) (X. 108).—They figure in one of the most prominent Samvada Sukta. Sarama (सरमा) and Panis (पणय:) are said to be alternately the *devata* and *ṛsi* in this Sukt, which is evidently impossible. In all probability, the name of the original *ṛsi* or *samhītakara* was forgotten, and the participants in the dialogue were taken as the authors of such hymns. (In such cases, the injunction is यस्य वाक्यं स ऋषि:—Sarvanukramani).

(ii) *Yama and yami* (यम-यमी).—They are regarded as the son and daughter of Vivasvan(विवस्वान्) and are mentioned as the *ṛsis* as well as the *devatas* of the hymn X. 10. Yama-Yami Sukta is also one of the earliest dialogues of our literature. Keith says that their names denote twin brother and sister, and they are the first human pair, but

according to Müller they are night and day.

(iii) *Indra, indrani and vṛsakapi* इन्द्र, इन्द्राणी, वृषाकपि—The original tradition regarding the seers of Sukta X. 86 appears to have been lost or suppressed, and therefore, following the dictum, *yasya vakyam sa ṛsih*, Indra, Indrani, and Vṛsakapi have been mentioned as seers.

(iv) *Pururavas and urvasi* (पुरुरवा-उर्वशी).—The Sukta X. 95 is a dialogue between Pururavas and Urvasi; and as such the Sukta has been attributed to them in absence of the name of a true seer (cf. *yasya vakyam sa ṛsih*). They are fictitiously known to be the seers.

(v) *Surya* (सूर्या).—This name, Surya, meaning the daughter of Surya or Savitṛ, is forcibly superimposed on the sukta X. 85, because the hymn relates to the marriage of Surya. Surya, in most probability, is any bride going to be wedded and is expected to lead a good family life.

(vi) *Bṛhaspai* (बृहस्पति).--He is said to be the seer of hymn X. 71. With Aditi, he is also mentioned as a seer of the hymn X. 72. This is obviously a fictitious tradition. The name of the original seer has been forgotten. This is a hymn, dealing with the "glorification of knowledge", and as such the Samhitakaras associated with it the name of Bṛhaspati, who is also known as *kavinam kavih* (कवीनां कविः, the seer of seers).

(vii) *Visvakarma bhauvana* (विश्वकर्मा भौवन).—Since Visvakarman is also the *devata* of the hymns X. 81, 82, Visvakarma Bhauvana could not be the seer of these hymns. The Nirukta says: Visvakarman sacrificed all beings in a *sarvamedha* sacrifice and finally sacrificed himself. This *ṛk* appears to be in his honour. In fact, Visvakarman Bhauvana is omnipresent God (X. 81. 3); the verses X. 81. 2, 4) are expressive of the philosophical thoughts regarding the origin of the world.

(viii) *Vasukra* (*aindra*) वसुक्र (ऐन्द्र).—He is said to be the seer of hymns X. 27-29. This seer is regarded as the son of Indra,—obviously a fictitious concept. Sayana's commentary of X. 27. 2 says "वासुक्रेषु सूक्तेषु बाहुल्येन इन्द्रः स्तूयते।". The Aitareya Aranyaka (1. 2. 2), however, emphatically asserts that this hymn belongs to Vasukra. The word *kapila* occurs in X. 27. 16. Some of the scholars have

suggested that divine birth of the ancient *ṛsis* is implied in X. 27. 15 when *sapta* refers to the Saptarsis, *asta* refers to the Valakhilyas (वालखिल्याः), *nava* to the Bhṛgus, and *dasa* to the Angirasas. Again traditionally the seer of the verse X. 28.1, has been ascribed to be the wife of Vasukra; there she complains that all the other gods have come to attend her sacrifice, Indra, her father-in-law, has not come*. Obviously, Vasukra is a fictitious name.

(ix) *Vimada* (विमद).—Vimada, another son of Indra, is a similar fictitious seer of the hymns X. 20-26; here Vasukṛta, the son of Vasukra is also mentioned as being the alternative seer of these Suktas. There might have existed a seer of the name Vimada, but his genealogical connection with Indra is obviously conjectural.

This description does not mean that all the seers, ascribed to the Tenth Book, are fictitious. Some of the authentic names appear to be, as follows: (Category I with names and families both authentic):

Trita Aptya, Sindhu-dvipa Ambarisa, Kavasa Ailusa, Lusa Dhanaka, Ghosa Kaksivati, Suhastya Ghauseya, Kṛsna Angirasa, Vatsapri Bhalandana, Saptagu Angirasa, Bṛhaduktha Vamadevya, Asamati Aiksvaka (X. 60, 1-4,6), Gaupayanas (Bandhu, Subandhu, Srutabandhu and Viprabandhu), Nabhanedistha Manava, Gaya Plata; Vasukarna, Vasukra, Ayasya Angirasa, Sumitra Vadhryasva, Bṛhaspati Angirasa, Gauriviti Saktya, Sindhuksit Praiyamedha, Jaratkarna Airavata (Sarpa) Syumarasmi Bhargava, Payu Bharadvàja, Murdhanvan Angirasa, Renu Vaisvamitra Aruna Vaitahavya, Saryat Manava, Tanva Prarthya, Arbuda Kadraveya (Sarpa), Baru Angirasa, Bhisag Atharvana, Devapi Arstisena, Vamru Vaikhanas, Duvasyu Vandana, Budha Saumya, Astaka Vaisvamitra, Sumitra, (Durmitra) Kautsa, Divya Angirasa Jamadagni Bhargava, (or Rama Jamadagnya), Astadanstra Vairupa, Nabhah Prabhedana Vairupa, Sadhri Vairupa, Upastuta Varstihavya, Bhiksu Angirasa (X.117), Uruksaya Amahiyava, Bṛhaddiva Atharvana, Citramahas Vasistha, Vena Bhar-

* ...न्यो ह्यन्यो भरिराजगाम, ममेवह श्वशुरो नाजगाम ।

(Ṛv. X.28.1)

gava, Kulmalbarhisa Sailusi (or Amhomuk Vamadevya), Kusika Saubhari (or Ratri Bharadvaja), Vihavya Angirasa, Sukirti Kaksivata, Sakaputa Narmedha, Sudas Paijavana, Mandhata Yauvanasva (or Ṛsika Godha), Saptarsayah (Bharadvaja, Kasyapa, Gotama, Atri, Visvamitra, Jamadagni and Vasistha), Anga Aurava, Jarita, Drona, Sarisṛkta and Stambamitra (X. 142, all are Sarngas), Atri Samkhya, Devamuni Airammada, Suvedas Sairisih, Prthu Vainya, Arcana Hairanyastupa, Mṛlika Vasistha (X. 150), Sasa Bharadvaja (X. 152), Sirimitha Bharadvaja, Purana Vaisvamitra, Pracetas Angiras, Visvamitra and Jamadagni (X. 167), Sabara Kaksivata, Samvarta Angirasa, (X. 172), Urdhvagrava Arbudi (Sarpa) (X. 175), Sibi Ausinara Pratardana Kasiraja, Vasumanas Rauhidasva (X. 179), Satyadhṛti Varuni (X. 185), Aghmarsana Madhucchandasa.

The last hymn of the Tenth Book (X.191) is known as the *samjnana sukta* (संज्ञान सूक्त), with Samvanana Angirasa (संवनन आंगिरस) as the *ṛsi*, who is an Angirasa (a *ṛsi*, belonging to the Angiras family). It must be said that the Samhitakaras have shown great propriety in concluding the Ṛgveda Samhita with this hymn which invokes the greatest social ideal of harmony, integrity and unity.

Sraddha Kamayani (श्रद्धा कामायनी) is the lady seer of the hymn X.151, of which the *devata* is also Sraddha, one of the noblest Suktas on Sraddha, the adoption of truth with all fidelity.

Ṛsikas or the lady-seers of the Ṛgveda—In the interpretation and Samhitikarana, not only male seers but ladies also took an important part. During the Vedic Period, our ladies were not denied the highest privilege of being the seer (*ṛsikas*) of the Vedic verses, expounders and the Samhitakaras of the Vedic Texts. Most of these female-seers figure in the Book X.

(i) *Lopamudra* (लोपामुद्रा).—In the First Book, the first lady-seer figuring is Lopamudra (I.179. 1-2) for the first two verses of the hymn, whilst the rest four are associated with Maitravaruni Agastya or Agastya's disciple, Brahmacari and Rati. The word Lopamudra occurs in the *mantra* of the same hymn (X.179.4). Dayananda

explains the word *lopamudra* as "one completely absorbed or lost in oneself", i.e. a lady actively participating in union with her lover. M. Bergaigne is of opinion that the hymn has a mystical meaning, Agastya being identifiable with the celestial Soma, whom Lopamudra, representing fervent prayer, succeeds after long labour in drawing down from his secret dwelling place. (*La Religion Vedique*, ii, 394f).

(ii) *Romasa* (रोमशा).—She is the Brahmavadini Ṛsika of I.126.7. The word *Romasa* occurs in this *mantra*. Romasa is said to be the wife of Svanaya (स्वनय) who is the seer of the preceding *mantra* I.126.6.

(iii) *Visvavara* (विश्ववारा).—She is the female seer of the entire hymn V.28; and belongs to Atri family. The hymn which is associated with her name is devoted to the subject of marital happyness and security of life. The word Visvavara occurs in the very first stanza, and the word has been translated by Dayananda as the lady who chooses or selects the whole universe and refers to cosmic light.

(iv) *Angirasi sasvati* (आङ्गिरसी शश्वती).—She is the *ṛsika* of VIII.1.34, (one verse only) and this word Sasvati occurs in this *mantra*. She belongs to the Angirasa family. The legend associated with a king Asanga was that he lost his manhood, became effeminate, and by the intercession of Medhatithi and Medhyatiṭhi, he again became virile; Sasvati congratulates on his restoration. She may not be the historical seer of this *mantra*, but since words have been put into her mouth, she has been called a *ṛsika* of this *mantra*.

(v) *Apala* (अपाला).—She is the female-seer of the entire hymn VIII.91, and like Visvavara, she also belongs to the family of the Atri. A very interesting legend about her is narrated by Sayana in the preface to that hymn. Apala, it is said, was afflicted with a cutaneous disease and was consequently repudiated by her husband. According to the legend (perhaps taken from the Satyayana Brahmana), Indra dragged her through the wide hole of his chariot, the narrower hole of the cart, and the small hole of the yoke and she cast off three skins. The first skin became

a hedge-hog, the second an alligator, the third chameleon. Wilson agrees with Prof. Aufrecht that the hole or span of the chariot and cart represents the opening between the four wheels; the hole of the yoke seems to him to mean the opening through which the animal's head passed.

(vi) *Yami* (यमी).—She figures as a *ṛsika* along with Yama in a dialogue hymn (X.10), and again in an entire hymn (X.154). She is known as Yami Vaivasvati, being the daughter of Vivasvan and Samjna (संज्ञा). She is a female counterpart of Yama, the procreator of human race also. The hymn (X.154) has the theme "New Life" *bhava-vṛt-tam*) therefore, it is appropriate that it should be attributed to Yami. Yama and Yami are also regarded as twin brother and sister. Yami may not be a historical seer—merely a conjectural name.

(vii) *Sraddha* (श्रद्धा).—Sraddha Kamayani (श्रद्धा कामायनी) is the *ṛsika* of X.151 (the entire hymn). This may be a merely allegorical name, and Kama may not be the *gotra* of this *ṛsika*.

(viii) *Vasukra-patni* (वसुक्रपत्नी).—She is the *ṛsika* of one verse (X.28.1). This hymn has the form of a dialogue between the father and the son. The verse is, as the legend says, spoken by Vasukra's wife, in ignorance, that her father-in-law, Indra (इन्द्र-स्नुषा) is present in disguise. Of course, the entire hymn is not so simple,—the mysticism behind the lines has to be explored.

(ix) *Ghosa*(घोषा).—Ghosa is the lady-seer of two hymns (X.39-40), and is said to be the daughter of Kak-sivan (कक्षीवान्). In the two hymns ascribed to her, we have a mention of a number of terms, round which legends were woven in latter literature: Cyavana, Taugrya, Vimada, Sundhyu, Vispala, Rebha, Atri, Saptavadhri, Pedu, Sayu, Bhrgu, Kutsa, Bhujyu, Vasa, Sinjara, Kṛsa; many of these terms have occurred in Book I also. The word Ghosa also occurs in I.117.7 and Sayana commenting on this says, that she was the daughter of Kaksivan and was a Brahmavadini. As she was suffering from a disease she could not be given in marriage to any one, and so she stayed at her father's house where she became old. She was,

however, cured of her disease by the favour of the Asvins and then she could be married (cf. X.39.3). The Bṛhad-devata gives her further details and says that Ghosa became sixty years old in her father's house. She knew that, by propitiating the Asvins, her father had obtained youth, long life, health etc. So she got an insight into these two hymns (X.39-40). The Asvins, in consequence, cured her of the disease and gave her a husband and a son, Suhastya (सुहस्त्य). In her hymn, so the legend says, she piteously prays the divine Asvins to heal her leprosy as they have healed many gods and men earlier (X.39.11). She is growing old at home (X.39.3), so let them grant her health, youthful beauty and help her to get a rich chieftain as husband (X.40.5). In the hymns ascribed to Ghosa, there is a verbal repetition of the phrases occurring in the hymns ascribed to Kaksivan and Kutsa. The parallelism is as follows:

X.39.1	=	I.118.3
X.39.4	=	I.117.13
X.39.8	=	I.112.8
X.39.9	=	I.116.3; I.112.7
X.39.12	=	I.117.2,15; I.118.1
X.39.13	=	I.112.8
X.39.14	=	I.120.6

Ghosa's genealogy with Angiras is as follows:

Angiras Ucathya (Ṛv.IX.50-52) Dirghatamas (Ṛv.I. 140–164) Kaksivan (Ṛv. I.116–125; IX.74) Ghosa (Ṛv. X. 30–40).

(x) *Surya* (सूर्या).—She is a conjectural seer of the hymn X.85, of which she is the sole *ṛsika* with 47 *mantras*. The hymn deals with the marriage of Surya (Surya's marriage 6–16); the hymn also contains the *mantras* which have a traditional significance for all general marriages with invocations and benedictions (20-28). The *mantras* 32–47 are still popular in Indian marriage ceremonies. The whole of the hymn has a living message for married couples.

Surya is supposed to be the daughter of Savitṛ.

(xi) *Indrani* (इन्द्राणी).—She is another fictitious lady-seer (not a historical one) of the hymn X.86, which is of a dialogue nature in which Indra, Indrani and Vṛsakapi have participated. The real Samhitakara of this hymn apears to have been lost or forgotten, and hence according to the tenet "*yasya vakyam sa ṛsih*", all the three have been, one by one, regarded as seers of the *mantras* spoken by them. The words Indra, Indrani and Vṛsakapi occur in several verses (e.g. X.86.11-13), Indrani or Saci Paulomi is also the lady-seer of X.159, since Saci is known to be the daughter of Puloma. The hymn X.145 is also known as Indrani-Upanisad.

(xii) *Urvasi* (उर्वशी).—She figures as one of the seers in the hymn X.95, which contains a dialogue between Pururavas and Urvasi. Here again, the *ṛsi* and *ṛsika* are conjectural, according to the tenet "*yasya vakyam sa ṛsih*".

(xiii) *Sarama* (सरमा)— The Sukta X.108 is a dialogue between Sarama and Panis, and according to the same tradition as above, in the absence of the name of an actual Samhitakara, Sarama and Panis have been conjecturally regarded as the seers. They are alternatively *ṛsis* and *devatas* both. Sarama, according to Aurobindo, represents some intellectual faculty (just as a similar word Sarasvati represents speech, learning and knowledge).

(xiv) *Juhu* (जुहू)— She is the seer of the hymn X. 109, and is known as Brahmajaya (ब्रह्मजाया, wife of Brahma) or a Brahmavadini. She is identified with *vak*. The legend says that her husband Brahma or Bṛhaspati had deserted her, but gods are said to have restored her to him. The *sukta* has been interpreted by Sayana in this light. In fact, it is one of the finest mystic *suktas*. In *viniyogas*, the word *juhu* stands for a ladle. The *sukta* consists of a symbolic description of the Brahman's function in respect to this mystic *juhu*. There is an alternative seer also mentioned of this *sukta* named as Urdhvanabha (ऊर्ध्वंनाभा, which also means the wife of Urdhvanabha, or of Brahma).

(xv) *Vak ambhṛni* (वागाम्भृणी).— Vak is a female seer of hymn X.125, supposed to be the daughter of Ambhrna

(अम्भृण). The word *vak* means speech or sound in most general terms to which the *sukta* appears to refer—the thunder of the storm, the reawakening of life at dawn, songs of rejoice at the near birth of the world. The idea of the unity of the world is invoked. Either the name Vak as the *ṛsika* is conjectural, or the lady-seer got her name also after the *sukta* on which she had worked as an interpreter or as a Samhitakaraka.

(xvi) *Paulomi saci* (पौलोमी शची).— She is the lady-seer of the hymn X.159, where Saci is known to be the daughter of Puloma. It is difficult to say whether Indrani, the *ṛsika* of X.86 and X.145 is the same person as Saci of X.159. Saci and Indrani may be the conjectural names associated with the names of Indra, figuring so highly in the Vedic literature. According to Wilson, *saci* means an 'act'; the hymn X.159 is metaphorically the praise of Indra's acts. Saci, however, prides on her being a destroyer of the rival wife, sole spouse, and a victorious conquerer. Ritualistically this hymn is also known to be *sapatni-badhana* (सपत्नी-बाधन; destroyer of the rival wife).

13

VEDIC METRES

Numbers of Syllables in Standard Metres

In counting the number of syllables in a metre, only the number of *vowels* (*svara*) is counted, not of the consonants without the vowels; the *svaras* normally are a, ā, i, ī, u, ū, ṛ, ṝ, lṛ, e, ai, o, au, visarga (:) and anusvara (ṁ). Sometimes the euphonic changes on account of *sandhis* are resolved, and then the total number of syllables, as required, may be reconciled. We shall not take up here such complicated details of exceptions.

The metres arranged in an increasing series of 4, starting from 24, are as follows :

Name of the metre	Total No. of syllables	Name of the metre	Total No. of syllables
Gayatri गायत्री	24	Sakvari शक्वरी	56
Usnik उष्णिक्	28	Atisakvari अतिशक्वरी	60
Anustup अनुष्टुप्	32	Asti अष्टि	64
Bṛhati बृहती	36	Atyasti अत्यष्टि	68
Pankti पंक्ति	40	Dhṛti धृति	72
Tristubh त्रिष्टुभ्	44	Atidhṛti अतिधृति	76
Jagati जगती	48		
Atijagati अतिजगती	52		

Besides these fourteen types of metres, we have another group of seven further in the series :

Kṛti (80), prakṛti (84), akṛti (88), vikṛti (92), sankṛti (96), abhikṛti (100), and utkṛti (104); (not available in the Ṛgveda, but in other Samhitas as the Vajasaneyi Samhita, Taittiriya Aranyaka, and Taittiriya Brahmana).

Nicṛt, Bhurik, Virat and Svarat

The three Gayatra Padas go to constitute the Gayatri metre, with 8+8+8=24 syllables. If the total number of syllables is less by 1, then the metre is known as *nicṛt gayatri* (total 23 syllables); if exceeds by one, then it is known as *bhurik gayatri* (25 syllables). Again if the total number of syllables is less by 2, then it is *virat* (22 syllables in all); and finally if the total exceeds by 2, then it is known as *svarat* (26 syllables) in all. The well-known Gayatri Mantra, *tat-savitur varenyam*, is *nicṛt gayatri*, since the total number of syllables in it is only 23 (7+8+8), and not 24.

This type of decrease or increase by one or two in syllables is permissible in metres other than Gayatri also, and in that case, the metres would be known as *nicṛt* $(x-1)$; *bhurik* $(x+1)$; *virat* $(x-2)$ and *svarat* $(x+1)$, when x is the total number of syllables in the standard metres as given in the previous table.

Gayatri— The standerd *gayatri* has 24 syllables in the order 8+8+8 in the three Padas. Several variations are shown here in the table. (गायत्री, पदपंक्ति, उष्णिगर्भा, पादनिचृत् अतिनिचृत्, यवमध्या, वर्धमाना, प्रतिष्ठा, ह्रसीयसी, विपरीतह्रसीयसी)

Subdivision	No. of Syllables	Number of Syllables in Padas (Feet)	Illustrations from the Ṛgveda. (Initial words)
Gayatri	24	8+8+8	I.3.7 (Omasasca)
Pada-pankti I	26	5+5+5+5+6	IV.10.6 (Ghṛtam na)
Pada-pankti II	25	5+5+5+4+6	IV.10.1 (Agne tamadya)*
Usnik-garbha	24	6+7+11	VIII.25.23 (Ta me)§
Pada-nicṛt	27	7+7+7	VIII.46.1 (Tvavatah)
Ati-nicṛt	20	7+6+7	VI.45.29 (Purutamam)
Yava-madhya	24	7+10+7	IX.108.13 (Sa sunve)
Vardhamana	21	6+7+8	X.9.5 (*Isana)
Pratistha	21	8+7+6	X.9.7 (Apah pṛnita)
Hrasiyasi	19	6+6+7	VIII.103.10 (Presthamu)
Viparita-hrasiyasi	19	7+6+6	I.17.5 (Indrah Sahasra)

* तमद्याऽश्वं = तमद्य + अश्वम्

§ अश्व्यानां = अश्वियानां; कृत्व्यानां = कृत्वियानाम्

Usnik—The standard *usnik* has 7+7+7+7=28 syllables in four feet. The popular eight variations of the metre are given here. (There is another *usnik* of 8+8+12=28 syllables of *gayatra* and *jagata* Padas.) [उष्णिक्, पुर उष्णिक्, ककुप्, ककुन्न्यंकुशिरा, तनुशिरा, पिपीलिकमध्या, अनुष्टुब्-गर्भा].

Subdivisions	No. of Syllables	No. of Syllables in Padas (Feet)	Illustrations from the Ṛgveda. (Intial words)
Usnik I	28	7+7+7+7	X.26.4 (Mansimahi)
Usnik II	28	8+8+12	VIII.12.1 (Ya Indra Soma)
Pura-usnik	28	12+8+8	VIII.98.9 (Yunjanti hari)
Kakup	28	8+12+8	V.53.11 (Sardham-sardham)
Kakub-nyankusira	27	11+12+4	VIII.46.15 (Dadi-rekna)
Tanu-sira	28	11+11+6	I.120.5 (Pra ya ghose)
Pipilika-madhya	28	11+6+11	X.105.2 (Hari yasya)
Anustub-garbha	29	5+8+8+8	I.187.1 (Pitum nus-tosam)

Anustup— The standard *anustup* has 8+8+8+8=32 syllables in four *padas*. The following eight variations of this metre have been described in Katyayana's the Ṛgveda Sarvanukramani. (अनुष्टुप्, महापदपंक्ति, कृति, पिपीलिकमध्या, काविराट्, विराट् नष्टरूपी):

Subdivisions	No. of syllables	No. of Syllables in Padas (Feet)	Illustrations from the Ṛgveda. (Initial words)
Anustup	32	8+8+8+8	V.10.5 (Tava tye agne)
Maha pada-pankti	31	5+5+5+5+5+6	IV.10.5 (Tava-svadistha)

Subdivisons	No. of syllables	No. of Syllables in Padas (Feet)	Illustrations from the Rgveda (Initial words)
Kṛti	32	12+12+8	I.120.8 (Ma kasmai)
Pipilikamadhya	32	12+8+12	IX.110.1 (Paryusa pra)
Kavirat	30	9+12+9	I.120.3 (Ta vidvamsa)
Nastarupi	32	9+10+13	I.120.4 (Vipṛcchami)
Virat I	30	10+10+10	VII.1.3 (Preddho agne)
Virat II	33	11+11+11	VII.1.1 (Agnim naro)

Bṛhati— The standard *bṛhatī* of the four *padas* has 9+9+9+9=36 syllables. About 9 prominent variations of this metre have been specially described in the Sarvanukramani and other books on the Vedic Prosody. (बृहती, पुरस्ताद् बृहती, न्यंकुसारिणी, उरोबृहती, स्कन्धोग्रीवी, उपरिष्टाद् बृहती, विष्टार बृहती, ऊर्ध्वबृहती, पिपीलिकमध्या, विषमपदा)

Subdivisions	No. of syllables	No. of syllables in Padas (feet)	Illustrations from the Ṛgveda. (Initial words)
Bṛhati I	36	9+9+9+9	I.187.11 (Tam tava vayam)
Bṛhati II	36	8+8+12+8	VIII.1.1 (Ma cidanyad)
Purastad-bṛhati	36	12+8+8+8	X.22.3 (Maho yaspatih)
(as nyanku-sarini or urobṛhati or skandhogrivi)	36	8+12+8+8	X.132.1 (Ijanamid)
Uparistad-bṛhati	36	8+8+8+12	VIII.46.18 (Ye patayante)

Subdivisions	No. of Syllables	No. of Syllables in Padas (Feet)	Illustrations from the Ṛgveda (Initial words)
Vistara-bṛhati	36	8+10+10+8	I.120.7 (Yuvam hya-stam)
Urdhva-bṛhati	36	12+12+12	IX.110.9 (Adha ya-dime)
Pipilika-madhya	34	13+8+13	VIII.46.14 (Abhi vo viram)
Visama-pada	36	9+8+11+8	VIII.46.20 (Sanitah susania)

Pankti— Pankti has five feet of 8 syllables each (8+8+8+8+8=40) or four feet of 10 syllables each (*virat*), 10+10+10+10=40); other 6 modifications are as follows according to the Sarvanukramani : (पंक्ति, विराट्, सतोबृहती, विपरीता, प्रस्तार पंक्ति, आस्तार पंक्ति, संस्तार पंक्ति, विष्टार पंक्ति).

Subdivisions	No. of Syllables	No. of Syllables in Padas (Feet)	Illustrations from the Ṛgveda. (Initial words)
Pankti	40	8+8+8+8+8	VIII. 46. 24 (Danasah)
Virat	40	10+10+10+10	VI.20.7 (Vi pipro-rahi)
Sato-bṛhati	40	12+8+12+8	V.53.6 (A yam narah)
Viparita	40	8+12+8+12	VIII.46.22 (Ya ṛsvah)
Prastara-pankti	40	12+12+8+8	I.164.42 (Tasyah samudra)
Astara-pankti	40	8+8+12+12	X.21.1 (Agnim na)
Sanstara-pankti	40	12+8+8+12	VIII.46.22 (Sastim sahasra)
Vistara-pankti	40	8+12+12+8`	V.53.14 (Atiyama)

Tristup—The standard *tristup* has four *padas* of 11

syllables each (11+11+11+11=44) with 44 syllables in all. This with 10 variations has been tabulated below: (त्रिष्टुप्, जगती, अभिसारिणी, वैराजत्रिष्टुप्, विराट्स्थाना, विराड्रूपा, ज्योतिः ज्योतिष्मती, महाबृहती, यवमध्या, पंक्त्युत्तरा, विराट्पूर्वा).

Subdivisions	No. of Syllables	No. of Syllables in Padas (Feet)	Illustrations from the Ṛgveda. (Initial words)
Tristup I	44	11+11+11+11	I.24.1 (Kasya nunam.
Jagati	46	11+12+11+12	I.162.6 (Yupa vraska)
Tristup II	46	12+11+12+11	I.164.14 (Sanemi cakram)
Tristup III	46	11+11+12+12	I.162.12 (Ye yajinam)
Abhisarini I	44	10+10+12+12	X.23.5 (Yo vaca)
Abhisarini II	39	9+ 9+10+11	I.89.6 (Svasti na indrah)
Vairaja tristup	39	10+9+11+ 9	II.11.4 (Subhram nu te)
Virat-sthana	40	10+9+10+11	II.11.1 (Srudhi havamindra)
Virat-rupa	41	11+11+11+8	I.122.6 (Srutam me)
Viparita virad-rupa	41	8+11+11+11	V.19.5 (Krihanno rasma)
Jyotismati	44	12+12+12+8	VIII.35.1 (Agnirnen-drena)
Jyotih	44	12+8+12+12	VIII.22.12 (Tabhira yatam)
Mahabṛhati	44	8+8+8+8+12	I.191.13 (Navanam navati)
Yavamadhya	44	8+8+12+8+8	I.105.8 (Sam ma tapan)
Panktyuttara (or Virat-purva)	44	10+10+8+8+8	V.86.6 (Evendragni)

Jagati— The standard *jagati* has four *padas* of 12 syllables each (12+12+12+12=48). Its other common

variations are *mahapankti* or *mahasatobṛhati.* (जगती, महापंक्ति, महासतोबृहती).

Subdivisions	No. of syllables	No. of syllables in Padas (Feet)	Illustrations from the Ṛgveda. (Initial words)
Jagati	48	12+12+12+12	IX.68.1 ((Pra devamaccha)
Mahapankti I	48	8+8+7+6+10+9	I.191.11 (Iya-ttika)
Mahapankti II	48	8+8+8+8+8+8	VIII.46.16 (Tada-nnaya)
Mahasato-bṛhati	48	12+8+12+8+8	VI.48.6 (A yah paprau)

Pragathas

Pragathas (प्रगाथा:) are combinations of the above metres. For example : (बार्हत प्रगाथ, काकुभ प्रगाथ, महाबार्हत प्रगाथ, विपरीतोत्तर प्रगाथ, आनुष्टुभ प्रगाथ).

(i) *Barhata-pragatha*=bṛhati+satobṛhati= 36+40 =76, which can be scanned as [(8+8+12+8)+(12+8+12+8)] as in 1.47.1–2 (combined) (Ayam va+Tribandhurena).

(ii) *Kakubha-pragatha*= kakup+ satobrhati=28+40+68 which is scanned as [(8+12+8)+(12+8+12+8)], as in VI.48.11-12 (combined) (Asakhayah+yasardhaya).

(iii) *Mahabarhata-pragatha* = Mahabrhati+mahasatobrhati=44+48=92, which is scanned as [(8+8+12+8+8)+(12+8+12+1+8)], as in VI.48.7-8 (combined) (Bṛhadbhiragne+visvasam gṛhapati).

(iv) *Viparitottara-pragatha*=Bṛhati+viparita (pankti) =36+40=76, which is scanned as [(8+8+12+8)+(12+8+12+8)] as in VIII.46.11-12 (combined) (Na hi te sura +ya ṛsvah).

(v) *Anustubha-pragatha*=Anustup+Gayatri+ Gayatri=32+24+24=80, which is scanned as [(8+8+8+8)+(8+8+8)+(8+8+8)] (combined) as in VIII.68.1-3) (A tva ratham+tuvisusma+yasya te mahina).

Long Metres

We shall now conclude this account with a brief outline of long metres, starting with 52 syllables (beyond the Jagati).

(i) Atijagati (52)=12+12+12+8+8, as in V.87.1 (Pra vo mahe).

(ii) Sakvari (56)=8+8+8+8+8+8+8, as in X.133.1 (Pro svasmai).

(iii) Atisakvari (60)=16+16+12+8+8, as in II.22.3 (Sakam jatah).

(iv) Asti (64)=16+16+16+8+8, as in II.22.1 (Trikadrukesu).

(v) Atyasti (68)=12+12+8+8+8+12—8, as in I.127.1 (Agnim hotaram).

(vi) Dhṛti (72)=12+12+8+8+8+16—8, as in I.133.6 (Avarmaha).

(vii) Atidhṛti (76)=12+12+8+8+8+12+8+8, as in I.127.6 (Sa hi sardho)

In the Ṛgveda

Metre	Syllables in a verse	No. of Mantras in this metre	Total No. of syllables
Gayatri	24	2,449	58,770
Usnik	28	398	11,144
Anustup	32	858	27,456
Bṛhati	36	371	13,306
Pankti	40	498	19,920
Tristup	'4	4,251	1,87,004
Jagati	[illegible]	1,346	64,608
Atijagati	-	17	884
Sakvari	56	19	1,064
Atisakvari	60	10	600
Asti	64	7	448
Atyasti	68	82	5,576
Dhṛti	72	2	144
Atidhṛti	76	1	76
Dvipada Gayatri	16	3	48

Metre	Syllables in a verse	No. of Mantras in this metre	Total No. of Syllables
Dvipada Virat	20	139	2,780
Dvipada Tristup	22	14	308
Dvipada Jagati	24	1	24
Ekapada Virat	10	5	50
Ekapada Tristup	11	1	11
Total		10,472	3,94,221

The Valakhilyadi Sukta

Metre	Syllables in a verse	No. of Mantras in this metre	Total No. of Syllables
Gayatri	24	7	168
Anustup	32	2	64
Bṛhati	36	56	2,128
Pankti	40	1	40
Tṛistup	44	7	308
Jagati	48	7	336
Total		80	3,044
Grand Total		10,552	3,97,265

THE VEDIC METRES AND THE FOUR PRINCIPAL PADAS

The Vedic metres are not so complicated as they appear to be at the first sight;— they can be easily reduced to their primary elements. Counting the syllables in the most mechanical manner, the auhtors of the Pratisakhyas, in their highly complicated and elaborate system have assigned a nearly hundred names to every variety which they discovered in the Rgvedic hymns. But I would not like my readers to go to that length. In fact, as even the Pratisakhya authorities could see, all these metres are really but four (Sutras 988; 919) :

(a) The Gayatra *pada*, of eight syllables ending in (⏑ repesents *hrasva*;—represents *dirgha*).

(b) The Vairaja *pada*, of ten syllables ending in – ⏑

(c) The Traistubha *pada*, of eleven syllables ending in – –.

(d) The Jagata *pada*, of twelve syllables ending in ⏑ –.

Then the next Sutra (990) says: The penultimate syllable in a Gayatra and Jagata *pada* is light (*laghu*, ⏑), in Vairaja and Traistubha *pada* heavy (*guru*,–). This is called their *vṛtta* (metre, *versus* in Latin). Again remember, how careful is the author of the Pratisakhya in his language. He does not say that the penultimate is *long* or *short* (*dirgha* or *hrasva*), but he simply states that from a *metrical point of view*, it must be considered as light or heavy (*laghu* or *guru*), which need not mean more than that it must be pronounced with or without stress. The authors thus differentiate between the pairs *dirgha – hrasva* (long or short) and *guru – laghu* (heavy or light). From the metrical point of view only, that the penultimate syllables (even if they are not long or short), they should be pronounced as heavy or light.

It has been generally supposed, that according to the Pratisakhya, there must be a long syllable (–) in the eighth or tenth place of Traistubha and Jagata, and in the sixth place of Anustubha *padas*. Of cource, there is no rigidity about these working rules, and we shall not enter into these details here. (For a detailed discussion, see Max müller : Vedic Hymns, Pt. I, SBE. series, Preface LXXXIX.). Pratisakhya (Sutra 523) states, that "The final vowel of the eighth syllable is lengthened in *padas* of eleven and twelve syllables, provided a syllable follows which is short in the Samhita" (I.32.4; I.94.1). Pratisakhya (Sutra 525) provides : "The final vowel of the tenth syllable in *padas* of eleven and twelve syllables is lengthened, provided a syllable follows which is short in the Sam hita" (III. 54.22; II.34.9) and similarly "The final vowel of the sixth syllable is lengthened in a *pada* of eight syllables, provided a syllable follows which is short". (I.5.10);

and if the seventh syllable is long, no change takes place. (IX.67.30).

Then another case is also to be taken for which there is a provision in Pratisakhya, Sutra 527: "In order to get the right number of syllables (in certain cases), we must pronounce sometimes one syllable as two". In these cases only with such a provision, the lengthened syllable be got into one of the places required by the preceding Sutra (526), viz., the sixth, the eigth or the tenth place. I have quoted these rules as a caution to an ordinary reader.

Counting of the number of syllables—It must be remembered that each syllable has to end in a vowel, and thus the number of vowels decides the number of syllables (it is immaterial whether the vowel is long or short, heavy or light). We have already mentioned about the four *padas*, the Gayatra (of eight syllables); Vairaja (of 10 syllables); the Traistubhạ (of eleven syllables) and the Jagata (of twelve syllables) and to these four, we may add another one, the half-Vairaja (of five syllables). We can reduce nearly all the hymns of the Ṛgveda to these simple elements, thus :

1. Three Gayatra *padas*=the Gayatri (24 syllables).
2. Four Gayatra *padas*=the Anustubh (32 syllables).
3. Four Vairaja *padas*=the Viraj (40 syllables).
4. Four Traistubha *padas*=the Tristubha (44 syllables).
5. Four Jagata *padas*=the Jagati (48 syllables).
6. Mixtures of Gayatra and Jagata *padas*=the Usnik (28 syllables), (a metre between Gayatri and Anustubh).
7. Mixture of the Anustubh and Vairaja *padas*=the Bṛhati (36 syllables) (a metre between Anustubh and Pankti).

Now I would like to refer to the rules regarding the counting of syllables. It is obvious that the following verse (III. 1) has (8+8+8)=24 syllables of the Gayatri metre (each syllable ends in a vowel).

Ag—ni—mi—le—pu—ro—hi—tam =8
Ya—jna—sya—de—va—mṛ—tvi—jam =8
Ho—ta—ram—ra—tna—dha—ta—mam =8

This is the *samhita patha* of the verse (the counting is done for the *samhita patha* only) and not the *pada patha* in which all words (*pada*) stand by themselves (as they do in Greek and Latin) without being joined together according to the rules of Sandhi. The text in which the words stand as joined by the rules of Sanskrit Sandhi is called the Samhita-patha. It is difficult to say whether the Pada-patha precedes the Samhita-patha or vice-versa. The Pratisakhyas start on the assumption that the Pada-patha is basic and it is taken, as it were, for granted, and devote their rules to the explanation of those changes which that text undergoes, in being changed into the Samhita text. This may not be true always; very often, the Samhita text appears to have been taken as basic by the authors of the Pratisakhyas also. (It is almost certain that neither the Pada nor the Samhita text, as we now possess them, represents the original text of the Veda. Both show clear traces of Scholiastic influence.)

But one thing is very much clear. Even in the present form, the original metre and rhythm of the hymns of the Veda are far more perceptible when the words are *divided,* than when we join them together *throughout* according to the rules of Sandhi. For practical purposes, the Pada text is far superior to the Samhita text in which the final and initial letters, that is, the most important letters of words are constantly disguised, and liable, therefore, to different interpretations. (Dayananda in his commentary, for this reason always insists on the Pada-patha).

For counting the number of syllables in a metre, Sandhis at *some places* have to be removed, and then the text would respond to the rules of prosody It must again be accepted that the Sandhi rules in the Samhita of the Ṛgveda, are by no means so uniform, rigid and regular as they are in later Sanskrit, and hence it is so often extremely difficult to bring all the exceptional cases under more or less general rules. There are numerous cases,

cited by the Pratisakhyas where an initial *a* in the Veda is not elided after a final *e* or *o*; in ordinary Sanskrit, it will always be elided; in the Samhita it is sometimes elided and sometimes not. (See Sutra 138 and 153, and also 139, of the Pratisakhya; the author gives the rules of exception as if he is a statistician and not a grammarian.)

I would like to conclude this discussion, which may not interest my general reader, by quoting a passage from Max Müller (*Vedic Hymns*, SBE, Pt. I.,p.lxxviii) :

"It is far easier, as I remarked before, to discover the original and natural rhythm of the Vedic hymns by reading them in the Pada than in the Samhita text, and after some practice our ear becomes sufficiently schooled to tell us at once how each line ought to be pronounced. We find, on the one hand, that the rules of Sandhi, instead of being generally binding, were treated by the Vedic poets as poetical licences only; and on the other, that a greater freedom of pronunciation was allowed even in the body of words than would be tolerated in the later Sanskrit. *If a syllable was wanted to complete the metre, a semi-vowel might be pronounced as a vowel, many a long vowel might be protracted so as to count for two syllables, and short vowels might be inserted between certain consonants, of which no trace exists in the ordinary Sanskrit.* If, on the contrary, there were too many syllables, then the rules of Sandhi were observed, or too short syllables contracted by rapid pronunciation into one : nay in a few cases, a final *m* or *s*, it seems, was omitted".

14

VEDIC ACCENTS

In order to have a full conception of the inner meaning of the Vedic prose, poetry and lyric (the Yajuh, the Ṛk, and the Saman), one should be familiar not only with the grammar of the language, and the etymology of words, he should also be conversant with proper accentuations. The old interpreters of the Vedic verses have laid great emphasis on proper accentuations. Being the earliest divine human speech, the words of the Vedic language are in their most fluid and plasmatic state. A slight change of accents brings about very often a considerable change in the meaning of the word. And therefore, our ancestors, not only made heroic attempts to preserve the Vedic texts to this day by reciting and memorizing, they did their best to retain the accents also. Panini, the great grammarian and the author of the Astadhyayi devotes a number of aphorisms in the first, third, sixth and eighth chapters, and Dayananda edited a collection of these Sutras, and published it under the title of the Sauvara with notes and explanations. The Ṛk Pratisakhya (प्रातिशाख्य), and similar other treatises also deal with this subject. We shall try to reproduce here just a few indications on this abstruse subject to familiarize a common general reader with a brief outline.

It must be remembered that the readings of the Vedic texts are of two types: *pada-patha* (पद पाठ), with each word (*pada*) or term spoken clearly and distinctly, and when these *padas* are compounded together according to the rules of euphony or *sandhi*, we get the *samhita patha* (संहिता पाठ); in fact, *sandhi* is the euphonic junction of final and initial letters in grammar, every sentence in Sanskrit being regarded as a euphonic chain, a break in which occurs at the end of a sentence.

Four types of accents—It must be remembered that only vowels (a, ā, i, ī, u, ū, ṛ, lṛ, e, ai, o, au, etc.) are

accented, and not the consonants. The vowels may be present as such, or along with consonants. For example, in

अग्निमीळे पुरोहितम् (Ṛv. I. 1.1.)

the last letter 'म्' is un-accented because it is a consonant without a vowel.

The accents are of four types:

Udatta (उदात्त), Anudatta (अनुदात्त), Svarita (स्वरित), and Ekasruti (एकश्रुति).

(i) *Udatta*—The acute accent, also known as high accent or a sharp tone is known as *udatta* (उदात्त). In the system of the Ṛk, the Yajuh and the Atharva, there is no sign or symbol to indicate an *udatta*; (as in अ॒ग्निम्, there is no indication on 'ग्नि', which is *udatta*), in the Samaveda *udatta* is represented by the *nagari* numeral one (१).

अ॒ग्न आ या॑हि (Sv. 1. 1. 1).

Udatta is not normally indicated by any accent mark, but it can be recognized by two rules: (i) that syllable has *udatta* accent, which has no mark on it, and preceding it, there is no accent, (ii) that is also *udatta* which has an *anudatta* in precedence.

Example: अग्ने॒ यं य॒ज्ञम॑ध्व॒रम् (Ṛv. I. 1. 4).

In this, according to the rule (i), ग is *udatta*, and according to rule (ii), यं, ज्ञ and र are also *udatta*.

(ii) *Anudatta.*—The *anudatta* is the accent-less vowel; it is also known as low or grave accent, not raised; it is a general tone, neither high nor low. It is represented in the Ṛk, the Yajus and the Atharva Samhita by a horizontal stroke below the syllable, as in अ॒ग्निं, अ॒ is *anudatta*. In the Samaveda, it is indicated by a *nagari* numeral 'three' (३) written at the top of the syllable.

(iii) *Svarita.*— The *svarita* accent is a kind of mixed tone, produced by a combination of high (the *udatta*) and

low (*anudatta*) tones, and therefore, named by Panini in the (Astadhyayi, I. 2.31) as *samahara* (समाहार). Svarita corresponds to the Greek circumflex and is of four kinds:

(i) *Ksaipra* (क्षैप्र), as in व्याप्त for वि+आप्त; (ii) *jatya* (जात्य), as in स्वं, (iii) *praslista* (प्रश्लिष्ट), as in दिवीव for दिवि+इव, and (iv) *abhinihita* (अभिनिहित), as in तेऽब्रुवन् for ते अब्रुवन्.*

The *svarita* in the Ṛgveda is marked by a small upright stroke above a syallable, as in अग्निमीळे; मीं is *svarita.*

The *svarita* in the Samaveda is indicated by the *nagari* numeral 'two' (2) written on the top of the syllable.

(iv) *Ekasruti.*—The *ekasruti* (एकश्रुति) or monotony or the hearing only of one sound is the fourth type of accent; this may be called as *pracaya* (प्रचय) also. In *eksruti*, the separate functions of the *udatta*, *anudatta* and *svarita* become *indistinct*, and hence they become monotonous. Usually syllables which *follow a svarita* and are not indicated by any stroke, are known as *eka-sruti*; e.g. in

होतारं रत्नधातमम् (Ṛv. I. 1. 1)

तां is a *svarita*, indicated by the vertical stroke, and the syllables which follow it रं and र which have no accent mark on them; and thus रं and र are known to be with *ekasruti* accent. Again in the same, the syllable तं is *svarita* and it is followed by मं with no accent mark on it, and hence it is also *ekasruti* in accent.

The *ekasruti* accent should be pronounced more or less like an *anudatta* since *ekasruti* follows a *svarita* which was originally an *anudatta*, and which is followed by an *anudatta*.

For an example, let us take the verse :

विश्वानि देव सवितर्दुरितानि परा सुव।
यद्भद्रं तन्न आसुव। (Ṛv. V. 82. 5; Yv. 30. 3)

***The Pratisakhyas describe nine types of Svaritas: (i) Sannidhija (सन्निधिज), (ii) Jatya (जात्य,),(iii) Abhinihita, (अभिनिहित) (iv) Ksaipra (क्षैप्र) (v) Praslista, (प्रश्लिष्ट), (vi) Tairovyanjana (तैरोव्यञ्जन), (vii) Vaivṛtta or Padavṛtta (वैवृत्त, पादवृत्त), (viii) Tairovirama (तैरोविराम) and (ix) Tathabhavya (तथाभाव्य); but we shall not enter here into these details.**

the syllables with a horizontal stroke below are रि॒, नि॒, शु॒ and शु॒; they are *anudatta*; the syllables with a vertical stroke at the top are वा॑, रा and सु॑; they have the accent *svarita*; the syllables without any accent mark and following the *svarita* are नि, सु, व and व are *ekasruti*. The first syllable वि, and then ता, य, द्रं, त and आ are with *udatta* accents.

The following are the *workable* rules in connection with accentuation:

1. A term or *pada* (पद) would never have more than one *udatta*; this is possible that it may not have any *udatta* (but never more than one).

2. On the contrary, one and the same term can have more than one *anudatta*, or several *svaritas*.

3. All the *anudattas* will have to be invariably indicated by horizontal strokes below the syllable (letter containing the vowel).

4. But if a term has a number of *svaritas* occuring succeedingly together, then only the first syllable will be indicated by a vertical stroke on its top, and not the succeeding *svaritas*, which in a way, become *ekasruti*.

5. (a) First the *udatta* is fixed up, if the term has any *udatta*; then the rest are *temporarily* designated as *anudattas* (with a horizontal stroke, for example, in the word वरुण, if व is *udatta*, then रु॒ and ण॒ are *anudattas*; if रु is *udatta*, then व॒ and ण॒ are *anudattas*; and if ण is *udatta*, then व॒ and रु॒ are *anudattas* :

वरु॒ण॒, व॒रुण॒, व॒रु॒ण

(Here the syllable without an accent mark is *udatta*).

(b) Then all the *anudattas following* the *udatta* are raised to *svarita* but not the *anudattas preceding* the *udatta* as shown below:

वरु॑ण॑, व॒रुण॑, व॒रु॒ण

as (of the two *svaritas* in sequence, the first is retained *svarita*, whilst the rest become *ekasruti*, वरु॑ण॑ becoming वरु॑ण.

6. The term in which all the syllables are *anudatta*, is known as *nighata* (निघात, unaccented). *Nighata* is usually

a vocative (*sambodhana*) or a verb. For example, in the verse विश्वानि देव, the word, देव (*deva*) is vocative, and thus it would be *nighata*, with both the syllables as *anudatta*. Similarly the word सवितः is vocative and hence a *nighata*. The word सुव, occuring twice is verb, and hence it is also *nighata*.

विश्वानि । देव । सवितः । दुः ऽइतानि

In this, the *udattas* for convenience are indicated with a cross (x) below the syllable; now the first *anudatta* after the *udatta* becomes, *svarita*, and succeeding *anudattas* become *ekasruti* (unmarked).

विश्वानि । देव । सवितः । दुः ऽइतानि

7. The terms in grammar fall under four heads: नाम (noun), आख्यात (verb), उपसर्ग (prefix), and निपात or ṇon-declinable. In most of the prefixes, the first syllable is *udatta*; अभि is an exception in which भि, the second syllable is *udatta*, and not अ, the first syllyble. So now we have,

विश्वानि । देव । सवितः । दुः ऽइतानि । परा । सुव

8. The first syllable of a pronoun is also *udatta*, as in यत् and तत्, the first syllable य and त are *udattas*.

9. ते, वां, वः, मे, नौ, नः, in such pronouns if the sense is of *anvadesa* (अन्वादेश), i.e. thine, mine, yours, ours, then the accent on the syllable would be *anudatta*, but if ते means they, then the syllable is *udatta*. And so now

यत् । भद्रं । तत् । नः । आ । सुव

So now the accents in the *pada-patha*, become :

विश्वानि । देव । सवितः । दुः ऽ इतानि । परा । सुव ।
यत् । भद्रं । तत् । नः । आ । सुव ॥

10. (a) The first syllable of a *nipata* (undeclinable) is *udatta*.

(b) The last syllable of *nama* (noun) is *udatta* (but if it is vocative case, then it is all *anudatta*, i.e. it is a *nighata*); and thus the last syllable of the noun भद्रं and दुःइत is *udatta* (द्रं and इत are *udatta*).

Not indicating the *udattas* by any notation (i.e. now if remove the crosses at the base), we have the final Pada-patha,

विश्वा॑नि । दे॒व॒ । स॒वि॒तः॒ । दु॒ऽइ॒ता॒नि॑ । परा॑ । सु॒व॒ ।
यद् । भ॒द्रं॑ । तत् । नः॒ । आ । सु॒व॒ ।

Various notations in giving accents—We shall confine to the notations used in the Yajurveda, the Ṛgveda and the Atharvaveda.

1. *Udatta* and *ekasruti* (or *pracaya*) are not indicated by any notations (these syllables are unaccented as if).

2. *Anudatta* is indicated by a horizontal stroke below the syllable, as क॒.

3. *Svarita* is indicated by a vertical stroke at the top of the syllable, as क॑ (one or more syllables following the *svarita*, but without a notation are *ekasruti*). Since the *ekasruti* follows a *svarita* and the syllable following the *svarita* has the characteristic of an *anudatta*, the *ekasruti* ought to be pronounced more or less like an *anudatta*.

4. Such syllables as follow the *svarita*, and have no notations on them are *ekasruti*.

5. The *svaritas* are of nine classes, which we shall not discuss; of these, the four notable ones are (i) *jatya* (ii) *ksaipra* (iii) *praslista* and (iv) *abhinihita*.

(i) The *jatya svarita* is a *svarita* on its own merit, i.e. due to its own intrinsic characteristics; it is also known as the *nitya-svarita*; e.g. क॒न्या॑, धा॒न्य॑म्, क्व॑, स्वः॑.

(ii) The vowels इ, उ, ऋ, लृ when followed by any other vowel are transformed to य्, व्, र्, ल् respectively in *sandhi*; this type of euphony is known in the Pratisakhyas as *ksaipra-sandhi*; e. g.,

वा॒जी + अ॒र्व॑न्॒ = वा॒ज्य॑र्व॑न्; नु + इ॒न्द्र॒ = न्वि॑न्द्र

As a result of these *sandhis*, the *udatta* ई and उ have com-

bined respectively with *anudatta* syllables, and the resulting य् and व् have become *svarita*. Such *svarita*s, as a result of *sandhi*, are known as the *ksaipra-svarita*.

(iii) A *sandhi* between the two vowels is known as *praslista*, e.g.,

(a) अ+अ=आ, इ+इ=ई etc.
(b) अ+इ=ए, अ+उ=ओ, अ+ए=ऐ, अ+ओ=औ

As a result of such a *sandhi*, different schools of the Samhitas ascribe different changes in the accents (they are not unanimous on this):

सु॒चि+इ॒व॒=सु॒ची॑व (Ṛv. X.91.15)

(In this the *udatta* इ of सु॒चि is combined with *anudatta* इ॒ of इ॒व॒, and as a result of this we get the *dirgha* ई of ची॑ with a *svarita* accent. Such a *svarita* as a result of combination of an *udatta* and *anudatta* is known as *praslista svarita*.

अ॒भि+इ॒न्ध॒ता॒म्=अभी॑न्धताम्=अभी॒न्धताम् (Yv.XI.61)

But in the Taittiriya Samhita—

अ॒भि+इ॒न्ध॒ता॒म्=अ॒भीन्ध॑ताम् (IV.1.6)

(iv) अ following ए or ओ becomes unmanifest or becomes *purva-rupa*;—such *sandhis* are known as *abhinihita*, and the *svarita* generated as a result of such a *sandhi* is known as *abhinihita-svarita*:

ते+अ॒व॒न्तु=ते॑ऽवन्तु=ते॒ऽवन्तु (Yv. XIX.57)
वे॒दः+अ॒सि॒=वे॒दो॑ऽसि=वेदो॒ऽसि

In the Madhyandina Samhita of the Yajurveda the *abhinihita*, as well as the *praslista svaritas* are denoted by a notation—'vertico-horizontal' stroke (└) placed below the syllable.

6. *Undulations or kampa* — The undulations (when spoken with a jerk are of four kinds: *jatya, ksaipra,*

praslista, and *abhinihita* produced as a result of a *svarita* of these types (described above) when followed by an *udatta* or a *svarita*. When a bronze plate is struck, it continues to vibrate for some time with a vibratory sound; similarly the undulations or *kampas* (कम्प) are produced as a result of jerking accentuations. The *short syllable*, with an accent of *svarita*, when pronounced with undulation or *kampa* is indicated by the *nagari* numeral one (१) with a vertical *svarita* stroke at the top and a horizontal *anudatta* stroke at the bottom. The numeral one indicates the short vowel (*hrasva*), and since the *praslista* and *abhinihita svaritas* (as a result of the *sandhi*) are never with a short (*hrasva*) vowel, the numeral one is never used in their case to denote the undulation or *kampa*.

Jatya : उक्थ्यं १ वचोयतस्रुचा (Ṛv. I.83.3)
Ksaipra : सुप्य १ह्नामं भद्रम् (Ṛv. I.108.3)

It should be seen that in these illustrations, क्थ्य is *jatya svarita*, which is followed by व which is *udatta* (without a notation); and similarly प्य is *ksaipra svarita*, which is followed by ना which is *udatta*.

The numeral one (१) is connected with a *short vowel* (*hrasva svara*) when spoken with a *kampa*, but when a *long vowel* (*dirgha svara*) is involved in producing the undulation or *kampa*, the *nagari* numeral ३ is used with a vertical stroke at the top and a horizontal stroke at the bottom of the numeral.

शतचक्रं यो ३ ह्यो वर्तनिः (Ṛv. X. 144.4).

In this the *long vowel* has an *anudatta* accent (a horizontal stroke at the bottom), and then it is followed by the numeral ३ with *svarita* and *anudatta* marks on the top and the bottom of the numeral.

The long vowel with *kampa* or undulation can be with all the four kinds of the *svaritas* :

Jatya : रथ्यो ३ वयस्वतः (Ṛv. II. 24.15)
Ksaipra : निकथ्या ३ यो: (Ṛv. II. 4.2)

Praslista : व्रुभी ३ दम् (Ṛv. X. 48.7)
Abhinihita : प्रथमं वां वृणानो ३ऽयं सोमः
(वृणानः+अयं) (Ṛv. I. 108.6)

It would be seen in these illustrations, that the *svarita* accents ध्यो, ध्वा, भी, and नो take an *anudatta* notation at the bottom of the long syllable and the numeral ३ takes *svarita* at the top and *anudatta* at the bottom; and finally the numeral is followed by व, योः, द, and यं with *udattas* as accents.

Sometimes, in such cases the accented numeral ३ is also followed by a *svarita*, as in,

शृ त चं क्रं यो ३ ह्वो वर्तनिः (Rv. X. 144.4).

Thus १ stands for the *svaritas* related to the *short* vowels, ३ for the *svaritas* related to the *long* vowels; there is no *svarita* related in the same fashion to the triply prolated (*pluta*, प्लुत) vowels, and so no notation for it.

7. We have said that in those cases where *jatya*, *ksaipra*, *praslesa* and *abhinihita svaritas* are followed by an *anudatta or ekasruti*, or where there is no syllable at all following such *svaritas*, the notation used to indicate is a 'vertico-horizontal' stroke ∟, at the bottom of the syllable as

प्रमों ऽसि, वृधोऽसि, वीर्याणि, प्रवोचं यः.

It must be remembered that when a *ksaipra svarita* is *not preceded* by an *anudatta*, this *svarita* is indicated as usual by a vertical stroke, a usual notation for the *svarita*.

त्र्यम्बकं यजामहे (Yv. III. 60), त्र्व्यां व्यचोत् (Yv. XII. 1)

But if the *jatya*, *ksaipra*, *praslesa* or *abhinihita svarita* is followed by an *udatta* syllable, then a trident-notation at the bottom of the syllable is used (ω), which resembles English w.

Jatya : वेर्दूत्व म वेता (Yv.II.9) here मं is *udatta*.

Ksaipra : पृथिव्यामुवंन्तरिक्षमन्वेमि (Yv. I. 11) here त is *udatta.*
Praslesa : श्रुचीमं मंहिमा (Yv. XXXVIII.17)-here मं is *udatta.*
Abhinihita; लोके ऽस्मिन् (Yv. III. 21)—here स्मि is *udatta.*

And so one should recognize that when a *jatya, ksaipra, praslesa* or *abhinihita svarita* is followed by an *anudatta* or *ekasruti,* then the notation used is vertico-horizontal stroke (∟), but when it is followed by an *udatta,* then the notation used is a trident (ш).

8. The notations, described above belong to the Madhyandina school of the Yajurveda; in other schools, the notations are different; for example, in the Kathaka Samhita, the *udatta* is indicated by a vertical stroke on the syllable (देवस्य त्वा सवितुः, I. 2); and if the *svarita* of the categories of *jatya, ksaipra, praslesa* and *abhinihita* are not followed by an *udatta,* it (the *svarita*), is indicated by a crescent stroke below the syllable : वीर्यमभिसमियात् (Kathaka XXIV. 5). प्राणो व्यानो ऽतिष्ठिता (XXXVIII. 5). We shall not discuss here the details of these differences. The Maitrayani Samhita has altogether a different system of notation.

We are not taking here the subject of assigning accent-notation in the *mantras* of Samaveda. Of the nine Samhitas of the Atharvaveda, only two are available, the Saunakiya and the Paippalada. In the Saunaka Samhita, the notation system for the *udatta, anudatta* and the *ordinary* or *usual svarita* is the same as in the Ṛk-Samhita. But for the *jatya, ksaipra, praslesa* and *abhinihita svaritas,* the syllable having the *svarita* is shown by an integration sign of calculus (∫), which follows the *svarita* syllable :

Jatya : दशंय यातुधान्यऽ: (Saunaka Av. IV. 2.6).
Ksaipra : तुन्वो∫ऽद्य (I. 1.1).
Praslesa : नी∫त एव (III. 11.2).
Abhinihita : ये∫स्वादोहमुपासते (V. 17.17).

In the Paippalada Samhita of the Atharvaveda, the *udatta* is indicated by a vertical stroke on the syllable, and *anudatta* by a vertical stroke below the syllable :

शिवा शग्मा मा (XIV. 2. 7), in which वा is *udatta* and शि is *anudatta.* The ordinary or the usual *svarita* is indicated by

a dot (.) placed just below the *svarita* syllable, as in ग़ and *ksaipra svarita* and the like are represented by a vertico-horizontal stroke below the syllable, as ग्वा in the above illustration. We shall take one more example :

त॒न्वा॒ शं॑न्त॒मया (XIV. 2. 8)

Here त॒ is *anudatta*, शं॑ is *udatta*, त़ is ordinary *svarita* and न्वा is *ksaipra svarita*. All the *ekasruti* syllables following the *ksaipra svarita* etc. are indicated by a dot placed below the *first* such syllable. For example :

जि॒ह्वा॑या॒ आ॒स्याय़ च (XVI. 104.6)

In this illustration, जि॒ and आ॒ are *anudatta*, ह्वा॑ is *udatta*, या़ is the *ordinary svarita*, स्या is the *jatya svarita* and य़ is first *ekasruti*.

The Madhyandina school of the Satapatha Brahmana represents an *udatta* by placing a horizontal stroke below the syllable; for example, in

वृष सु ꣴ स्यिते विसृजते (I. 1. 1. 2)

वृ, स and वि are *udattas*.

9. Nasal sound before the *usma* (ऊष्म; श, ष, स, ह) and *antastha* (अन्तस्थ; य, र) consonants are represented by two notations (i) ꣳ and (ii) ꣴ ; the former one (ꣳ) is termed as *short* nasal, and the latter one (ꣴ) as the long. This notation is not used in the Ṛgveda and the Atharva, but profusedly used in the Yajurveda, and dubiously in the Samaveda.

Short ꣳ—अघश ꣳ सः (Yv. I. 1)= अघशंसः (श is short and is followed by an *usma* स).

द्युमन्त ꣳ समिधीमहि (Yv. II. 4)=द्युमन्तं समिधीमहि
मनसा स ꣳ शिवेन (Yv. II. 24)=मनसा सं शिवेन
विश्व ꣳ हि (Yv. IV. 2)=विश्वं हि
अह ꣳ रक्षसां (Yv. VI. 1)=अहं रक्षसां

Long ꣳ—

अपाꣳरे ताꣳसि (Yv. III. 12)=अपां रेतांसि (पा and ता are long and hence notation ꣳ)

स्या ꣳ सुवीरः (Yv. III. 37).
स्वाहा ꣳ शाय (Yv. X. 5).
नवीना ꣳ हरिम् (Yv. XIII. 42).
हवी ꣳ ष्यस्मे (Yv. VIII. 18).

Dependence of interpretation on Accents

The Vedic terms, being the most ancient and natural, constitute the plastic material of a semi fluid state, capable of giving multiforms of interpretation. In such cases of ambiguity, the accents go a long way in breaking of words into correct components and giving correct interpretations. There are the cases where the *pada-patha* is misleading: for example, usually, we have the following text of the verse:

वने न वा यो न्यधायि चाकन् (Ṛv. X 29.1).

In this text, we have वा and यो written separately, and according to Sakalya, वा and यः are the two distinct *padas*. But Yaska, the author of the Nirukta says :

वायो वेः पुत्रः।··· । वेति च य इति चकार शाकल्यः ।
उदात्तं त्वेवमाख्यातमभविष्यत् असुसमाप्तश्चार्थः । (Nir. VI. 28)

[As a trembling young bird has been placed on a tree As a trembling or anxiously longing, young bird, i.e. the young offspring of a bird. Sakalya has analysed *vayah* (वायः) into *va* (वा) and *yah* (यः); then the finite verb would have had the acute or *udatta* accent, and the sense would have been incomplete]. Here actually the finite verb is *anudatta* low or grave.

We take another illustration from the Yajuh (Yv. XXXII. 2), which can be written in two ways :

नतस्य प्रतिमाऽअस्ति (There is an idol of the inclined one).
न तस्य प्रतिमाऽअस्ति (There is no idol of the one described).

(न and त are both *udatta*, as accepted by convention)

If we accept the first one with the accents as traditionally accepted, then in न तस्य, न and त are both *udatta* or acute, but according to the well-known rule one word or term cannot have more than one *udatta* and therefore, नतस्य is ruled out in favour of the terms न and तस्य written or interpreted separately. "There is no idol of the one described" is, thus, the correct interpretation.

Let us take another similar illustration. We have in the Nasadiya Sukta (Rv. X.129.1)

किमावरीवः कुह कस्य

In this text कुह and कस्य are written separately with two *udattas* in कु and क.

Ravana translates it as कुहकस्य as combined : यथा कुहकस्येन्द्रजालिकस्य; Dayananda translates it as : यत् प्रातः कुह कस्य वर्षाकाले धूमाकारेण वृष्टं किञ्चिज्जलं वर्तमानं भवति···(Ṛgbhabhu), in which on close observation, it appears that he translates कुह as क्वचित् or किञ्चित् (not every where, or just a little) and कस्य as जलस्य, i.e. of water. If कुह and कस्य terms are combined to give only one term कुहकस्य, then it cannot have two *udattas* or acute accents.

Interpretation differs with accents—Let us take a few examples from the ordinary Sanskrit usages:

(a) कृष्णकम्बलम् आनय and (b) कृष्णकम्बलम् आनय. Here (a) and (b) read the same with a difference in accents. In (a), ण of कृष्ण is *udatta* or acute, i.e. there is an acuteness in कृष्ण, and therefore, it would mean, "bring the one who has a black blanket." Here, the emphasis is neither on black nor on blanket but on the person who is putting on a black blanket, and yet, if seen minutely, there is an emphasis on "black"; there may be a number of persons with blankets, but the one, referred to is that person who puts on a *black* blanket, and therefore, the *udatta* accent has been placed on कृष्ण (black) and not on कम्बल (blanket). Here is an illustration of *bahuvrihi* compound, in which the compound word retains the same accent as that of the first term. (Panini: बहुव्रीहौ प्रकृत्या पूर्वपदम्, VI.2.1)

In (b), the *udatta* accent is in कम्बलम् (on ल), and hence

it means that "bring the black blanket", which puts emphasis on blanket.

We shall now quote a few illustrations indicating how the interpretation differs with accents.

(i) We have a verse in the Ṛgveda ;

हनो॑ वृ॒त्रं जया॑ अ॒पः (Ṛv. I.80.3)

and the other in the Atharvaveda:

ज॒यो मे॑ स॒व्य आहि॑तः (Av. VII.52.8).

In both of these verses, we have the word जय but with different accents. In the Ṛgveda verse, the word is *udatta* in the beginning जया॑ (ज is *udatta*, *adi-udatta*), and it means then that "(O Indra), may you win over waters or *apas*."

In the Atharvaveda, ज॒यो, the word is *udatta* on the last syllable यो, and therefore, the text means that "victory is assuredly in my left hand."

Venkata Madhava has thus clearly stated, that if the accent differs, the interpretation should also be changed. A few illustrations from his Ṛgvedic commentary are given here :

	Word	*Meaning*
1.	जठ॑रः	अग्निः (fire)
	ज॒ठरे॑ः	उदरवचनः (stomach)
2.	यम॑ः	येन गच्छति (by whom one goes)
	य॒मः	वैवस्वतः (Vaivasvata Yama)
3.	स॒त्यम्	ऋतार्थे (truth)
	सत्य॑म्	दारिद्र्ये (poverty)
4.	ज्येष्ठ॑ः	प्रशस्यः (the better)
	ज्ये॒ष्ठः	वयसा ज्येष्ठः (the elder)
5.	सुकृ॑तम्	निष्ठान्तम्
	सुकृत॑म्	क्विबन्तम्
	सु॒कृ॒तम्	भावे निष्ठान्तं बहुव्रीहि

15

OUR TRANSLATION

The Vedas, since the earliest days of our civilization and culture have been regarded as the literature of Supreme Authority, the revealed code given to man by the divine Lord for his highest development and final release from bondage; it has come down to man as his first speech and first scripture at a period when there were no class restrictions, no racial, national and geographical boundaries, and therefore, the Vedas have a message for all people of all nations and of all times living on this terrestrial planet in the company of innumerable species of dumb and mute animal creatures, who for their code of living are guided dominatingly by their so-called *instincts*, whilst man is the only highly developed species, which has to be *instructed*, and the Vedas constitute the element of our first divine instruction.

The Veda or the Divine Knowledge is one, with a uniform divine philosophy of *dynamic realism* in this purposeful creation. The study of the Veda cannot be made structure-wise, scattered through a number of strata; it cannot be taken as a piece-meal. The Vedas, as a supreme surprise, have been preserved to us with utmost care in the form of four Books or Samhitas, all bearing the same message, indicating the same spirit of thought, possessing the same gospel of life; and thus the texts and their material content should be considered as an *integral whole*. It is against our traditional spirit to read into the lines of this sacred scripture numerous stages of evolutionary development, and regarding some passages as the earliest and primitive, whilst the others as highly evolved and therefore, the last to be composed. Our modern scholars of the Vedic literature trained on a new methodology, developed in the West during the past two centuries or so, have considerably erred on this

score in their enthusiasm of anthropology, linguistics, philology and even archaeology. The Vedas were always held in high esteem, and therefore, they have been influencing history in several ways; they have been so often misunderstood also. It is to the credit of the Western scholars that they very scientifically edited the oriental texts, prepared their glosses, indexes and concordances; but their translations, annotations and the critical study lacked in the sense of that sympathy which a scripture meant to elevate mankind through all times deserves. It is not a fault of the modern scholars so much as of our own learned scholiasts for whom the Vedic texts remained for centuries merely formulae for ritualistic and ecclesiastical practices. Our people preserved the heritage of the *mantras*, but their dynamic meaningfulness was entirely lost to them. It was a blessed augury for all of us that at the close of the Nineteenth century, we had a person of the stature of Dayananda Sarasvati, well-versed in the Vedic literature and grammar, a man with clear vision and of a high spiritual order. He gave us a new insight into the studies of the Vedic texts. The Vedas are, according to him, to be interpreted with the Vedas themselves, and with the esteem with which the spirit of the seers of the Upanisads, and of the six systems of the Vedic philosophy looked upon them. In other words, the Vedas are to be interpreted with a theistic rationalistic view, given to us at a time when the language was in its most fluid natural form, free from the arrogance of specified and concretized meanings. Vedic texts are the *first source* of language and ideas both; they are, as so often mistaken, not the *outcome* of a language with which man-community was well-versed, and the *outburst* of the ideas, already evolved in the society. In this sense, the Indian philosophers have been saying, and never tired of repeating the same again and again, that the Vedas are *apauruseya* (अपौरुषेय) or non-man-composed. The Vedas constitute a source, not a reservoir. I know, it would be difficult for a man, trained on modern lines, to appreciate this vital difference. But once you accept this proposition, Dayananda's point of view of interpretation would be quite clear. Many of our present day scholars err in this

respect. They start with an imposed hypothesis that *like any other literature*, the Vedas too derive their contents from innumerable channels, flowing from the Arctic regions, from the Central Asia, from the Middle-East, or from other remote corners of the world. This is quite natural to think so, if you regarded the Vedas as one of the most ancient *reservoirs*, fortunately saved for us from the ravages of times. But if you consider the Vedas, as the First Source, the entire picture would be different. Dayananda, and later on Aurobindo revived this idea again for us in modern times, quite in consonance with the concept held by the seers of the Upanisads and Indian philosophy. So they constitute a Divine Code, the First Source Book, and a literature to inspire us in all walks of our life for our individual and collective good. Not that we are interested in the study of a very ancient literature or language, not that we are interested in the history of human development through ages, that we should go through the contents of the Vedas, but since they contain in them an eternal message of life, and have a present-worth for all of us, that we should take to the studies of the Vedas, and adopt them for our dynamic life. They constitute a LIVING BOOK and not a *dead past*.

We have, in our present studies, tried to interpret the Vedas on the basis of the following traditionally accepted postulates :

1. The Vedas constitute the First Source Book of Knowledge, given to man, for his individual and collective good, in the present life and for a better future.

2. The Supreme Knowledge emanates from the same Lord as is the Creator of the universe also and to whom we owe our own corporeal existence in this life and the lives to come. And therefore, there should be no contradiction between what we read into the texts and what we observe in the creation.

3. The concept of divinity is a concept of monotheism; the entire creation is governed by one existence, supreme and super, omniscient, omnipresent and omnipotent. He alone is the Source Book of Knowledge and the First Cause of all that has been created. Our Lord, the First Cause, is an Infinite Unity; and He, the Supreme Self,

with all His benevolence, has created this world for the good of numberless infinitesimal unities (the category of lower self), out of the eternally existing matter, self-endowed with plastic material causality.

4. The world is real, in no sense a dream, a myth, an illusion, but all the three, the Creator, the creation, and the infinitesimal selves, constitute a *dynamic reality*.

Our Lord is not only the cause of creation, and the source of knowledge, the moral code for man has also been provided by him. He is the primary source of an ethical code. He Himself is morality-personified. He is Truth, He is Justice, He is Benevolence, He is Activity and He is the Supreme Bliss. An interpretation of a Vedic Text which goes against the concepts of morality, exemplary ethics and standard values of life, is, therefore, not acceptable. The personal ethics is outlined in the five *yamas* and five *niyamas* enumerated in the Yoga Sutras of Patanjali. The five restraints or *yama* are: (i) benevolence or non-violence, *ahimsa* (अहिंसा), (ii) truthfulness or *satya* (सत्य), (iii) abstinence from misappropriation or *asteya* (अस्तेय), (iv) celibacy or *bramacharya* (ब्रह्मचर्य), and (v) freedom from avarice, non-covetousness or *aparigraha* (अपरिग्रह). The five observances or *niyamas* are: (i) cleanliness or *sauca* (शौच) (ii) contentment or *santosa* (सन्तोष), (iii) austerity or *tapas* (तपस्), (iv) study and self-evaluation or *svadhyaya* (स्वाध्याय), and (v) devotion to the Supreme Lord or *isvarapranidhana* (ईश्वरप्रणिधान). The Atharva-veda enumerates some of these values as *satya* (सत्य, truth), *bṛhat* (बृहत्, infinite), *ṛta* (ऋत, eternally right), *diksa* (दीक्षा, consecration), *tapas* (तपस्, austerity or penance), *brahma* (ब्रह्म, knowledge), and *yajna* (यज्ञ, selfless dedication)—these are the values which sustain our life on this Mother Earth (Av. XII. 1. 1).

6. The Vedas have a message for all and sundry; they treat man as a son of the Mother Earth and the celestial father. The Vedas were given to us at the earliest times when there were no geographical boundaries of land, sea or interspace, and no proper names were given to a land, to a mountain, to a river or to a sea either. All men belonged to a common world, and they stood for universal

fraternity. It was centuries afterwards, that the rivers, and lands were given proper names borrowed *from* the Vedic texts. Neither our Himalayas were known by this name, nor our Vindhyas, neither the Sindhu, the Ganga, the rivers of the Punjab or of the Indo-gangetic plane had yet their names, nor the cities like Ayodhya, Prayaga or Kasi were known as cities either. The Vedas speak of the eternal history or the *sasvata-itihasa,* and not the history as we understand it today. Names of places, and objects like rivers or hills and persons were given much after. The Vedas do not give an account of any conflict or war of human history; they speak of the eternal conflict that goes in man even today,—an internal conflict between truth and non-truth, good and evil, between the baser and noble instincts, a conflict between nescience and knowledge. It is the ultimate victory of light over darkness which has been so often spoken of in so many ways. It is a conflict between Arya and Dasyu, the law-abider and law-breaker, but it is not the racial conflict. The *asuras* or *panis* are not the Assyrians; the Dasyus are in no sense the Dravidians. To see an account of racial or national conflicts in the lines of our Vedic texts, or to trace the history of our relationships to the days of the first revelation would be our utter ignorance and scholiastic injustice.

7. Man has been blessed with language; this is warranted by his capacity of uttering distinct syllables, vowels and consonants of our vocal organ and of identifying them with distinctness by our hearing aid. Man is thus, by his nature, a hearing and speaking biological species. In that sense, our Lord has provided him with divine Speech as a vehicle to communicate and receive ideas. Whilst this speech is man's special privilege, it has its own limitations. It is one of the most important vehicles given to us for our communication, but after all, it is a very *poor* vehicle. In a set language of limited vocabulary, we have to express our thoughts of gross and abstract realms both. In its term, we have to express the entire spectra of all human experiences. Sugar is *sweet* in a biochemical sense, music is *sweet* in another sense, one's face is *sweet* in another way; our relations are sweet in some other connotation,

and thus we have the sweetness, as if of the ephemeral and physical realms, and beyond that some other type of sweetness of mental and spiritual realms. Each and every sweetness has its own spectrum, but our vocabulary is poor. There is a celestial world outside with the sun, moons, and stars, but there is a similar world of inner experience in our interior too. The Vedic texts have their own peculiar fascinating way of taking you step by step, so often in one and the same hymn, from a mundane object to the higher level, and elevating you higher and higher, they would take you to the most abstract and delightful spiritual realms. These texts would be talking to you in terms of your household fuel-fire, but lift you up by and by to the highest elevated fire of the innermost core of the Anandamaya and the Vijnanamaya Kosas. They might start with the description of a sweet herbal extract (so well known as Soma), but take you to the Soma of your invigorating youth, and finally to the highly elevating and exhilarating experiences of our spiritual realm. Thus these texts would sometimes in one and the same hymn would take you upon a sojourn from the most familiar known mundane realm to the loftiest experience, for which we do not possess any vocabulary in our language. Similar to Soma, we have so many other terms, which are applicable on mundane plane as well as the higehst spiritual plane. For example, Maruts may be ordinary soldiers of an army, brilliantly dressed and decorated, and accomplished with shining weapons. They may be again rain-bearing thunder-clouds in the spatial regions; they may equally constitute our vital forces of inner realms, when we talk of them in a spiritual context. Indra as a resplendent lord may be the head of any organization, even a state; again for the same reason, he may be *lower self* (the soul or *atman*) in a body; he may be one of the names of the sun, or he may be our Creator, the Supreme Lord.

8. Like all divine things, the Vedic text is capable of mutliple interpretations. The multiplicity is due to various reasons. The texts are in a fluid language, which in its most natural form, is capable of multiple interpretations. In this sense, a term like "*go*" (गो) may mean earth

or cow or both. Interspace has been given sixteen synonyms in the Nighantu, including words as *apah* (which may also mean water), *prthivi* (also meaning earth) and *samudra* (also meaning sea). The word *parvata* means mountain and cloud both; the *sruti* or Veda contains terms nearest to their etymology, and in that sense, the word like '*tata*' means father and also son; the word *nana* means mother and daughter both. The word *pati* (the protector) stands for husband and father (or the head of a group) both; *bhrata* and *bharta* (brother and husband) carry the same sense. In the *sruti,* the etymological means would naturally give rise to the multiplicity of interpretations. On the other hand, in the *sastra*, each term should have a definite restricted connotation.

Multiplicity of interpretation is also due to the universality of concepts. What is applicable to a small group may equally be applicable to large groups. The study of units takes us to the study of groups. Then, we have another type of multiplicity which arises out of the analogies or parallelisms. This gives birth to the well known *adhi-bhuta* (अधिभूत), *adhi-deva* (अधिदेव), and *adhyatma* (अध्यात्म) concepts. One and the same text may be interpreted in a parallel way in all the three realms; physico-chemical, biological and psychological; very often, there is another type of cryptical multiplicity of interpretations, which is also permissible in the Vedic texts. The words, *bhuh*, *bhuvah* and *svah,* may be cited as examples of this category; the words *agni, mitra, varuna, soma, indra, asvinau,* are also cryptical in the same sense, and have to be interpreted according to the context.

There is another cryptographical group represented in terms of numerals. The so-often quoted example of the type is the Text :

चत्वारि शृङ्गा त्रयो अस्य पादा द्वे शीर्षे सप्त हस्तासो अस्य ।
त्रिधा बद्धो वृषभो रोरवीति महो देवो मर्त्याँ आविवेश ॥

(Ṛv. IV. 58.3)

This has been translated by Griffith as follows :

Four are his horns, three are the feet that bear him,
his heads are two, his hands are seven in number.
Bound with a triple bond, the steer roars loudly,
the mighty God hath entered into mortals.

Now who is this steer; and what is the idea behind the numerals four, three, and seven? In the ritualistic interpretation of Sayana, the four Vedas are the four horns of *agni*; and if identified with *aditya*, then the four cardinal points are the four horns. The three feet in the former case are the three daily sacrifices, in the latter morning, noon and evening. The two heads are, in the former case, the Brahmaudana (ब्रह्मौदन) and Pravargya (प्रवर्ग्य) ceremonies; in the latter, day and night. Similarly, the seven hands are explained, alternatively, as the seven metres of the Veda (*gayatri, usnik* etc.) or the seven rays of the sun; and the triple bond as the Mantra, Kalpa, and Brahmana, prayer, ceremonial, and rationale, of the Veda, or the three regions, heaven, firmament, and earth. According to Mahidhara (since this verse is also found in the Yajurveda, XVII. 91), the four horns are priests; or nouns, verbs, prepositions and particles; the three feet are the Vedas, or the first, second and third persons; or the past, present and future tenses; the two heads are two sacrifices, or the agent and object; the seven hands are the metres or the cases of the noun; and the three bonds are the three daily sacrificies, or the singular, dual and plural numbers. The Nirukta (XIII.7) also discusses this verse, and Patanjali in his commentary has discussed it in relation to the subject of grammar (as indicated by Mahidhara).

There is another crypto-numerical verse of the same type :

चत्वारि वाक् परिमिता पदानि तानि विदुर्ब्राह्मणा ये मनीषिणः ।
गुहा त्रीणि निहिता नेङ्गयन्ति तुरीयं वाचं मनुष्या वदन्ति ॥
(Ṛv. I.164.45: Av. IX.10.27)

discussed by the Nirukta (XIII. 9): Speech has been measured out in four divisions; the three, kept in close con-

cealment, cause no motion; of speech, men speak only the fourth division. Speech or *vak*, it is said, was created four fold; three kinds of which are in the three regions (the Rathantara on Earth, the Vamadeva on the firmament, and the Bṛhati in the heaven). According to the Nirukta, the three *maha vyahṛtis* and *om* constitute the four divisions. According to grammarians, the four are *nama* (noun), *akhyata* (आख्यात) (verbs), *upasarga* (prepositions) and *nipata* (particles); according to ritualists, the four are *mantra, kalpa, brahmana,* and *vyavahariki* (व्यावहारिकी). According to the etymologists, the four divisions are *ṛk, yaju, sama,* and *vyavahariki*. Dayananda considers the four divisions to be *nama* (noun), *akhyata* (verb), *upasarga* (prepositions) and *nipata* (particles); of these the three (*nama, akhyata* and *upsargas*) are used only by the people of learning, whilst the ignorant ones, the common people, use only the *nipatas* or prepositions. According to another school, the four divisions pertain to reptiles, to birds, to small snakes, and the fourth is the speech of common man. Another classification considers the speech of cattle, birds, musical instruments and primitive races of forests.

9. In order to interpret a word, one should be familiar with the rules of grammar and etymology both. The interpreter should be familiar with several disciplines of knowledge, since neither grammar nor etymology alone would lead to a sound interpretation. One should be familiar with the Vedic diction also. The nature of our problem of interpretation would be clear from the two passages, which we quote from the Nirukta (II.5 and 6); here the word *gauh* (गौः) has been interpreted in ten ways: (i) The word *gauh* is a synonym of 'earth', so called because it goes very far, or because people go over it (√*gam*, गम्). Or it may be derived from √*ga* (गा) with the suffix *au* (*ga—au—gau*). (ii) Moreover, it is a synonym of 'an animal', from the same root also. (iii) Further, in the latter meaning, there are Vedic passages where primary forms of *gauh* are used in a derivative sense: "mix Soma with milk" (गोभि श्रीणीत मत्सरम्, IX. 46. 4; *gobhih*—with milk; *matsaram—soma*). Here *gauh* is used in the sense of milk.

Matsarah (मत्सरः) means *soma*; it is derived from the root √*mand* (मन्द्), meaning to satisfy. *Matsarah* is a synonym of greed also : it makes man mad after wealth. *Payas* (पयस्) (milk) is derived from the √*pa* (√पा), to drink, or from √*pyay* (प्याय्), to swell. *Ksiram* (क्षीरम्), (milk) is derived from the *ksar* (√क्षर्), to flow; or it is derived from √*ghas* (√घस्), to consume, with the suffix *ira* (ईर), like *usira* (उशीरः, root of a plant). (iv) "Milking Soma, they sit on a cow-skin" (अंशुं दुहन्तो अध्यासते गवि, X. 94.9), i.e. *gauh* is used in the sense of cow-skin used for sitting on. *Amsuh* (अंशुः, Soma is so called because) no sooner than it goes in, it is agreeable, or it is agreeable for life. *Carma* (चर्म, skin) is derived from the root √*car* (√चर्), to move, or it is so called because it is cut off from the body. (v) Moreover, *gauh* means skin and phlegm :"Thou art girded round with skin and phlegm, be strong" (गोभिः सन्नद्धो असि वीळयस्व, VI. 47.26); this is said in praise of a chariot. (vi) Moreover, it means tendon and phlegm : "Girt with tendon and phlegm, it flies when dischared" (गोभिः सन्नद्धा पतति प्रसूता", VI. 75.11); this is in praise of an arrow. (vii) Bow-string is called *gauh* also: if it be *gavya* (गव्या), it is the derivative form; if not, it is causal, i.e. it sets arrows in motion: "On every strip of wood, twanged the well-strung string: thence the men-eating birds flew" (वृक्षे वृक्षे नियता मीमयद् गोस्ततो वयः प्र पतान् पूरुषादः, X. 27. 22).

In this passage the word *vih* (विः) is a synonym of bird, and is derived from the root *vi* (√वी), to go. Moreover, it is a synonym of arrow also from the same root [thus *vih* (विः)=bird=arrow]. (viii) The Sun is called *gauh* also, for we have: "Lo that charioteer in the sun who has joints" (उतादः परुषे गवि, VI. 56.3). "Having joints means having brilliance", says Aupamanyava. Moreover, a ray of the sun illuminates the moon. That the illumination of the moon is caused by the sun is to be established by the following : "Susumna is the ray of the sun, the moon is the holder" (सुषुम्णः सूर्यरश्मिश्चन्द्रमा गन्धर्वस्तस्य, Yv. XVIII. 40, S.Br. IX. 4.1.9). This too is a Vedic passage. (ix) That ray is called *gauh* also. "Here indeed they thought of the ray" (अत्राह गोरमन्वत, I. 84.15). (x) All the rays are called *gavah* (गावः) also: "We desire to go to those regions of you two, where

are nimble and many-horned rays. There indeed, shines forth brightly that highest step of the wide-striding Visnu".

ता वां वास्तून्युश्मसि गमध्यै यत्र गावो भूरिशृङ्गा अयासः ।
अत्राह तदुरुगायस्य वृष्णः परमं पदमवभाति भूरि ॥

(Ṛv. I. 154. 6)

We have illustrated our point of view by citing only one example, i.e. the interpretation of the word "*gauh*" out of hundreds of such words occurring in our Vedic texts.

10. The Vedic philosophy is not the philosophy of pantheism, —it is not the heathen worship of all gods either. It is not the doctrine that God is everything and everything God. It is not the monism either in the sense that only one being exists; it does not deny the duality of matter and spirit, *prakṛti* (प्रकृति) and *atman*(आत्मा)The Vedic doctrine is not the concept of henotheism, which represents the belief in one God without asserting that he is the only God. It is not a concept that when we talked of God as Agni, we attributed to him super-most qualities, whilst we thought of other gods Indra, Mitra, Varuna, Visnu, or Soma as subservient to him; and the next moment when we talked of Varuna, we attributed supermost attributes to him, giving other gods as a secondary position. Nor is the Vedic philosophy a philosophy of primitive theism of anthropological nature, nor is it the concept of atheism. It is a concept of all embracing pure monotheism, depending on the coexisting eternal and immortal God, the one, the supreme all-knowing and omnipotent blissful existence, an Infinite Unity, along with numberless *infinitesimal unities*, known as *lower self* or the soul (the *jivatman*, जीवात्मा), infinitesimal but existing for all times, the uncreated beings, which for their knowledge and bliss depend on the grace of God, who is just and benign. Coexisting with the above-mentioned two categories the Supreme Self, and numberless infinitesimal lower selves, is a third eternal category of Prakṛti or matter with the *material causality* as its only attribute; it provides a multidimensional canvas to the

Great Artist, the Supreme Self, for creation. The art is His, the canvas is hers, of the *prakṛti*. He manifests Himself through His creation. The glory of the Sun, the beauty of the Moon, the vast force behind the Wind, clouds or storms is His. He is the light behind all lights; He is the Force beyond all forces; He is the divine behind all divinities, and he is the supreme bliss behind all that is pleasant and sweet. And in that sense, He becomes the Personified Fire, the Personified Light, the Personified Sun, the Personified Wind and so on and so forth. He alone is to be invoked, whilst apparently we are invoking His manifestations in this creation. This is the sublime concept of monotheism behind the curtain of his glory manifested in His divers creation.

The lower self when embodied in a corporeal complex manifests itself also in the same way. The minor gods to to be invoked in this case are eyes, ears, the organs of smell, taste and touch and breathing system. The glory of these minor gods is *de facto* the glory of the self, the *atman*. In the Cosmic Complex is the glory of the Supreme Lord, and through His glory, the Nature's bounties, the minor gods, become glorious and worthy of invocation; in our body complex, the real glory is of the self, whilst so long, the self stays in the body, its glory secondarily glorifies the sense-organs, which in the Vedic terminology, are also known as minor gods.

Veda and Deva—In the Vedic texts, the word for god or gods is *deva* or *devata*. Dayananda defines the word *devam* as दातारं हर्षकरं विजेतारं द्योतकं वा (Ṛv. I. 1.1), i.e. the one who is a donor, the cause of happiness, the cause of victory, or the shining one. At another place, he translates *devan* (देवान्) as दिव्यानीन्द्रियाणि, विद्यादिदिव्यगुणान्, दिव्यान् ऋतून्, दिव्यान् भोगान् वा (I. 1. 1), i.e. the glorious sense organs, glorious attributes as learning etc., the glorious seasons, and glorious objects of enjoyment. The word *deva* (देव) is a synonym of learned persons (*Daya.* on Ṛv. I. 34. 11; 40. 3; 44 13; 53. 11); it is synonymous with Sun, Moon, Earth and other celestial bodies: पृथिवी सूर्यलोकादयः (*Daya.* on I. 164. 39); the word *deva* or *devata* stands for 33 entities : eight *vasus* (वसवः), elever

rudras (रुद्राः), twelve *adityas* (आदित्याः), Indra (इन्द्र) and Prajapati (प्रजापति) (S.Br.). Each verse or hymn of the Vedas is associated with certain *devatas*; which indicate the subject-matter of the verse. This we shall take up in some details.

Vedas and Devatas—We have a detailed discussion on *devata* (deities) in the Nirukta; i.e. a discussion on the subject-matter in the Vedic verses. Yaska in the Nirukta (VII. 1-5) says: The section which enumerates appellations of deities, to whom panegyrics (*stuti*) are primarily addressed is called *daivatam* (दैवतम्), i.e. relating to deities. A seer addresses his panegyrics for the fulfilment of certain desires, and from whom he wishes to attain his objects. Such stanzas of panegyrics are of three kinds: (i) indirectly addressed (*paroksakṛta*, परोक्षकृत), (ii) directly addressed *pratysksakṛta*, प्रत्यक्षकृत), and (iii) self-invocations *adhyatmikya*, आध्यात्मिक्य). Of these the indirectly addressed stanzas are composed in all cases of nouns but the verb of the *third* person only. For example: (a) Indra rules heaven, Indra earth (X. 89. 10). (b) I will indeed proclaim the heroic exploits of Indra (I. 32. 1).

Then, the directly addressed stanzas are compositions in the second person, and are joined with the word "thou" as the pronoun. For example,

Thou, O Indra, art born from strength (X. 153. 2).

Moreover, the praises are directly, while the objects of praise are indirectly, addressed; e.g.,

Do not praise any other (VIII. 1.1).
Sing forth, O Kanvas (I. 37. 1).

The self invocations are compositions in the first person, and are joined with the word 'I' as the pronoun, e.g. the hymn of Indra Vaikuntha (X. 48; 49) the hymn of Lava (X. 119) or the hymn of Vak (X. 125):

I was the first possessor of all precious gear (X. 48.1).

I have enriched the singer with surpassing wealth (X. 49.1).

I, in my grandeur, have surpassed the heavens and all this spacious earth. Have I not drunk the Soma Juice. (X. 119. 8)

I travel with the Rudras and the Vasus, with the Adityas and All-gods, I wander. (X. 125. 1)

Of the three types of the verses, directly addressed, and indirectly addressed are by far the most numerous. Self-invocations (*adhyatmikyas*) are few and far between.

In some verses, there is only praise of the deity without any benediction being invoked; for example, in the hymn, "I will indeed proclaim the heroic exploits of Indra"[1] (I 32. 1). Further, in some verses there is only benediction without any praise being offered, as "may I see well with my eyes, may I be radiant in my face, may I hear well with my ears."[2] Such verses are invariably found in the Yajurveda (*adhvaryaveda* आध्वर्य वेद), and sacrificial formulae, There is another category, where there are asseverations (*sapatha*, शपथ) and imprecations (*abhisapa*, अभिशाप), e.g.,

अद्यामुरीय यदि यातुधानो अस्मि । (May I die today, if I be a juggling demon. (VIII. 104. 15).

अधा स वीरैर्दशभिर्वियूयाः । (Now may he be deprived of ten heroes.) (VII. 104.15).

Further, in some verses, there is an intention of describing a particular state :

न मृत्युरासीदमृतं न तर्हि । (Then was no death, nor indeed immortality.) (X. 129.2).

तम आसीत् तमसा गूळ्हमग्रे । [In the beginning (of creation), there was darkness, hidden in darkness.] (X. 129.3).

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1. इन्द्रस्य नु वीर्याणि प्रवोचम् । (Ṛv. I. 32.1)
2. सुचक्षा अहमक्षीभ्यां भूयासम् । सुवर्चा मुखेन । सुश्रुत कर्णाभ्यां भूयासम् । (cf. Paraskara Gṛ. Su, II. 6.19; Asva. Gṛ. Su. III. 6.7)

Then in some verses, there is apprehension (परिदेवना) arising from a particular state :

> सुदेवो अद्य प्रपतेदनावृत् । (The benevolent God may fly forth today and never return.) (X. 95. 14)

> न विजानामि यदि वेदमस्मि । [I do not know whether I am this or (that)]. (I. 164.37)

Then in certain verses, there is censure (निन्दा) or praise (प्रशंसा); e.g.,

> केवलाघो भवति केवलादी । (He alone is guilty who eats alone.) (X. 117.6)

> भोजस्येदं पुष्करिणीव वेश्म । (This dwelling place of a liberal person is beautiful like a lotus bed.) (X. 107. 10)

Similarly, there is censure of gambling (द्यूत-निन्दा) and praise of agriculture (कृषिप्रशंसा) in the dice-hymn. (X. 34).

There are certain stanzas in the Vedic texts where deities are not assigned or specified. Such stanzas, according to the Nirukta, belong to the same deity to whom that particular sacrifice, or part of the sacrifice is offered. Before taking up the work of commenting on the Vedic texts, Dayananda prepared for his personal use, the index of *devatas* of all the four Vedas, that is he tentatively assigned the subject matter with care and scrutiny. In such cases, seers are supposed to be guided by visions in respect to the interpretations of the Vedic Mantras (एवमुच्चावचैरभिप्रायैर्ऋषीणां मन्त्रदृष्टयो भवन्ति, Nir. VII. 3).

Where there is no reference to sacrifice, and no deity specified, the verses are said to belong to Prajapati according to ritualists, and to Narasamsa (नाराशंस) according to etymologists.

Sometimes, the *devata* or deity may be an optional one, or even a group of deities. It is indeed a very prevalent practice, as the Nirukta says, in every-day life in the world to dedicate things in common including what is sacred to gods, to guests and to the manes.

In some hymns or verses, we find that not only the well-known deities are praised, the non-deities are also praised like deities; for example, the objects beginning with *horse* and ending with *herb* (Nigh V. 3. 1-22) together with the eight pairs अष्टौ द्वन्द्वानि (Nigh. V. 3. 29-36). On such cases, the author of the Nirukta says, "The student should not think that matters relating to gods are adventitious as it were. On account of the super-eminence of the deity, a single soul is praised in various ways. Other gods are the individual limbs of a single soul. Or else, as people say, seers praise objects according to the *multiplicities* of their original nature, as well as from its universality. They are produced from each other (e. g. Daksa is said to be born from Aditi, and Aditi from Daksa). They are the original forms of each other. They are produced from *karma* (action), they are produced from the soul. Soul is even their chariot, their horse, their weapon, their arrows; soul is indeed the all in all of gods. And thus, according to Yaska, the non-deities are but different manifestations of the same single soul as if. They all shine by the divine glory of the Supreme Self. And therefore, even the non-deities are treated as if they are deities.

According to the etymologists, there are three deities (*devatah*) only (Ait. Br. II. 17): (i) Agni, whose sphere is Earth, (ii) Vayu whose sphere is atmosphere or inter-space, and (iii) Aditya or the Sun whose sphere is heaven. In our human complex, these three deities correspond to the physical body, vital complex, and psychological complex. Of these each receives many appellations on account of his super-eminence, or the diversity of his function, just as a priest, though he is one, is called the sacrificer (*hotṛ*), the director (*adhvaryu*) the possessor of the sacred lore (*brahama*) and the chanter (*udgatṛ*).

The author of the Nirukta has also discussed the question of *appearance* (*akara-cintana* आकार चिन्तन) of these gods. Some say, that they are anthropomorphic for their panegyrics as well as their appellations (*purusavidha*) are like those of sentient beings. We have such texts :

ऋष्वा त इन्द्र स्थविरस्य बाहू ।
(O Indra, the two arms of the mighty one are noble). (VI.47.8)

आ द्वाभ्यां हरिभ्यामिन्द्र याहि ।
(O Indra, come with thy team of two bay steeds). (II.18.4)

अद्धीन्द्र पिब च प्रस्थितस्य ।
(O Indra, eat and drink the (Soma) placed before (thee). (X.116.7)

आश्रुत्कर्ण श्रुधी हवम् ।
Hear our call, O God that has't listening ears (I. 10.9)

This is merely a literary style of addressing these deities, for everyone knows that fire, air, sun, earth or moon are unanthropormorphic (in no way like a man). It must be rememered, that not only deities but inanimate objects, like stones, herbs, dice etc. have also been addressed, as if they are anthropomorpdic.

अभि क्रन्दन्ति हरितेभिरासभिः ।
(They shout with their green mouths). (X. 94.2)

This is a panegyric of stones. (ग्रावस्तुतिः).

सुख रथं युयुजे सिन्धुराश्विनम् ।
Sindhu yoked the comfortable car, drawn by a horse. (X. 75.9).

This is a panegyric of a river (नदी-स्तुतिः).

One should, therefore, have a full familiarity with the Vedic diction or the verbal style before he can really interpret the Vedic stanzas. It is the divine knowledge which is being imparted to man, who, at least, is expected to know of himself, and therefore, the Vedic texts appear to have anthropomorphic contexts, even when they are referring to inanimate objects or deities.

Another peculiarity of the Vedic diction must be realized. It is a fact that according to the Vedic concept, our Supreme Lord is one, though He is known by various names, according to His attributes, functions and nature.

We have a verse :

इन्द्रं मित्रं वरुणमग्निमाहुरथो दिव्यः स सुपर्णो गरुत्मान् ।
एकं सद् विप्रा बहुधा वदन्त्यग्निं यमं मातरिश्वानमाहुः ॥
They call Him Indra, Mitra, Varuna, Agni, and He is heavenly noble-winged Garutman.
To what is one, sages give many a name; they call it Agni, Yama and Matarisvan. (Ṛv. I. 164.46)

And thus Indra, Mitra etc. are different names, titles or attributes of one and the same Supreme. But, it is so often that it appears that gods are being jointly invoked. Indra is jointly invoked along with Agni, Soma, Varuna, Pusan, Bṛhaspati, Brahmanaspati, Parvata, Kutsa, Visnu and Vayu. Mitra is jointly praised with Varuna; Soma with Pusan and Rudra; Pusan with Vayu and Parjanya with Vata. The function of Aditya or sun is to draw out and hold the juices with his rays. This Aditya is jointly praised with Candramaṣ, Vayu and Samvatsara. (Ait. Br. II. 32; III. 31).

Salient Features of the Present Translation

1. The translation is meant to be enjoyed by all, and in no case is meant for Vedic scholars and the spirit of the text is given in a simple language for those who would like to be inspired with the Vedic lore.

2. The language used is the present day prose, and not the Biblical English. Even for God, the second person plural has been used, and not the second person singular, commonly in usage in the Vedic text.

3. The Vedic grammar takes up a considerable licence in respect to inflexions and so on, and therefore, simplest grammatical rules have been followed in our translation. As far as possible, present tense, including present perfect, have been given preference over past tenses.

4. Each verse is capable of multiplicity of interpretations; in our translation, we have preferred to interpret text from spiritual and psychological point of view to inculcate love, dedication and devotion to our Lord. There

are yet occasions, where interpretations have been given on other lines, whenever the subject matter obviously refers to social topics.

5. The words like Indra, Agni, Mitra and Varuna have been translated in regards to the connotations they represent. They have not been treated as specific *deities* or gods; they represent common appellations to lower self or the Supreme Lord. They are attributive and not proper names. And so are terms like Maruts or Asvinau.

6. Interpretations are based on the fact that there is no conflict between the Vedic ideas and the experiences and observations in the divine creation. No interpretation would be held valid if it goes contrary to Nature's Laws, or contrary to the morals or high values of life.

7. Since the Vedas were given to us prior to human history, the interpretations are given on the basis of the concept that no historical or geographical references are to be sought for in the Vedic texts.

8. The Vedas constitute the divine knowledge; there is no primitivism in the Vedas. It would have been erroneous on our part if we had interpreted them anthropologically or archaeologically.

9. The Vedas precede all our philological contacts. The Vedic words occur in their most natural form, and as such, they have been interpreted in the natural way. In this respect, the derivations indicated by the authors of Nirukta, the Unadi Kosa, and the lines shown by Dayananda and Aurobindo have been very useful.

10. The Vedas are the Source Books, and much later in history, these texts came to be used for ritualistic purposes, and therefore from time to time, various types of *viniyogas* were suggested. We have tried our best to see that the interpretations are not prejudiced by ecclesiastical and ritualistic considerations. This does not mean that the fire ritual, or *yajna*, with fuel, butter and edible and medicinal preparations, has no sanction in the Vedas. The Vedic texts speak of the *havir yajna*, cosmic *yajna* and spiritual *yajna* with a unique parallelism.

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